THE INDIAN OCEAN
Towards a Peace Zone

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PREFACE

The Indian Ocean has all too suddenly shot up in news during the last few years. Hardly a month or a week passes when the daily press and news magazines do not carry one or the other report, article, commentary or interview by a high-ranking present or former naval officer, or a knowledgeable defence analyst. A number of scholarly articles by eminent experts on foreign policy and international relations can also be found in the issues of various respectable journals. In the United States, they even held an international conference on the Indian Ocean last year and a joint Anglo-U.S. panel study on the Persian Gulf was undertaken in late 1968.

Yet, a greater part of this rather impressively large literature available on the subject is at best an apologia for the various Western moves in the Indian Ocean and a misrepresentation of the policies of the Soviet Union and other peace-loving Afro-Asian states. Being a major power in the Indian Ocean having vital stakes in the region, it is important for India to acquire a correct understanding of the developments on and around the waters of the ocean that surrounds us from three sides.

The purpose of this book is to discuss and analyse such recent developments in the Indian Ocean as have a bearing on the problem of security in the area. It does not pretend to be a history of inter-state relations of the various countries of the region, or of their relations with the Big Powers

It examines the British policy of so-called withdrawal from East of the Suez and discusses the recent moves of the Super Powers in the Indian Ocean. It also examines the aims of Japan and China—two major outside powers which are most likely to play a significant role in the Indian Ocean. The situation in the Persian Gulf, which is essentially an important part of the Indian Ocean, has also been dealt with at some length. India's role in the Indian Ocean has been analysed, and an evaluation of the Indian policy attempted with a view to offering a few guidelines.

Strangely enough, the 19th century bogey of Russian threat to the South Asian land mass from across the northern mountains which served to cover Britain's own imperialist designs towards Central Asia, is being revived in our days as the bogey of Soviet naval threat to the Afro-Asian continents from the southern waters of the Indian Ocean. Obviously, the intention is to cover the Anglo-U.S. objective of dominating the region by forging new military alliances and drawing in the racist South Africa and Australia on both the flanks of the Indian Ocean.

I must express my sincerest thanks to the Librarians and staff of the libraries of the Indian Council of World Affairs and the Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi, for their help and co-operation.

DEVENDRA KAUSHIK

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CHAPTER ONE

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Looking like an inverted W, the Indian Ocean is, in fact, a vast gulf with two branches—the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. Geographers do not agree among themselves about its territorial limits. Whereas to Vallaux it is an ocean separated from the Antarctic by a line drawn at 35° south latitude, Schott would have the southern sea included in it.[1] Nor has there been any agreement as to its eastern limits, and the question whether the Timor and Arafura Seas, lying between Indonesia and Australia, be included in it has remained a disputed one. The area of the Indian Ocean, on the basis of the extent defined by Vallaux, is 16,362,742 square miles, and on that of Schott, 30,095,723 square miles.[2] Even if we were to take the largest dimensions, the Indian Ocean is the smallest of the world's oceans, a little smaller than the Atlantic, and much smaller than the vast Pacific.

The Indian Ocean abounds in both large islands as well as coral atolls. 250 miles from the African shore is the island of Malagasy or Madagascar, which is the fifth largest island in the world. South of India is Ceylon, and to the east are the large islands of Sumatra and Java leading eastward in a chain along the Timor Sea to Australia, a continental island.

There are three main chains of smaller islands. The first forms a 700 mile circle from Diego Suarez at the northern end of Madagascar which includes the Amirante and Sey-

cheles group, Cargados Carajos group, and Mauritius and Reunion island, with Rodriguez another 200 miles beyond. Inside this ring 250 miles from Diego Suarez are Assumption island, Aldabra, and Farquhar, with the Comoro islands commanding the northern entrance of Mozambique.

The second chain consists of a coral atoll spread evenly across the equator over a distance of 1,500 miles from north to south. They include the Laccadive, Minicoy and Amindive groups of 19 Indian islands 200 miles to the west of South India, 1,087 islands in 19 groups of atolls forming the sultanate of Maldive, including Addu atoll at the southern extremity, and Chagos Archipelago and its harbour of Diego Garcia, 300 miles further to the south.

The third chain is made up of a garland of islands between Burma and Sumatra, starting with the Burmese Preparis and Coco Islands, followed by the 219 Indian Andaman and Nicobar islands with, among others, the fine natural harbour at Port Blair and Nancowry.

In addition to the three chains and apart from small islands very close to land masses, there are some scattered islands. 3,000 miles to the south of Ceylon lie the islands of Amsterdam and St. Paul, and further south, at about the limit of the ice-free zone, are the Marion and Prince Edward islands, Crozet islands, McDonald and Heard islands, and Kerguelen island which the German raiders used successfully in World War II.[3] Two more small Australian administered islands—Cocos and Christmas—lie 600 miles south-west and 200 miles south, respectively, of the southern tip of Sumatra.

A large number of countries are concerned with using the Indian Ocean. Among them (apart from the two Super Powers and the U.K. and France) are India, Pakistan, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Burma, Ceylon, South Africa, Tanzania, Kenya, Somalia,

Ethiopia, Iran and the Persian Gulf states. One-third of the world's population lives in the countries of the Indian Ocean perimeter, and the area is rich in several important minerals and raw materials.

Historically, the Indian Ocean has been quite important. While the Atlantic came into prominence only late in 1775, that is, since the birth of the United States of America, events like the expedition of Vasco da Gama around the Cape of Good Hope into the Indian Ocean towards the close of the 15th century, and the opening of the Suez Canal in the 19th century, are generally associated by historians with the beginning of modern and contemporary history respectively. A seafarer's manual of the 1st century A. D., *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, described with extraordinary precision the world of the Indian Ocean.

The history of navigation in the Indian Ocean goes back to about 2,300 B.C., to the days of the Pharaohs.[4] The Egyptian sailors sailed to the legendary country of *Punt*, which has been identified as either Mozambique or the Somalian Coast, in search of gold and incense. The Pharaohs' first effort to link the Red Sea to the Mediterranean by canal was made during the reign of Queen Hatshepsut (1490-1475 B.C), and finally carried out by Darius, King of Persia in the 6th century B.C.

The Sumerians, whose heyday lasted from 2,850 to 1,900 B.C., began to navigate the Persian Gulf at about the same time when the Egyptians moved into the Red Sea towards *Punt*. The maritime relations between India and Mesopotamia, however, go back no further than the first millenium B.C. The Egyptian voyages to *Punt* appear to be the only really noteworthy expeditions in the Indian Ocean before the first millenium B.C., and the Egyptian, Sumerian and Mohenjodaro civilizations are believed by some scholars to be "above

all, continental in nature".[5] The Phoenicians from the Mediterranean are supposed to have carried their navigation far into the Indian Ocean to *Ophir*, though it remains controversial whether they sailed round Africa.

The record of Indian navigation in the waters of the Indian Ocean, some exaggeration notwithstanding, has been quite an impressive one. Radha Kumud Mookerji collected sufficient evidence to prove India's claim to be considered one of the oldest maritime powers of the world.[6] The *Vedas* speak of sea voyages, and there appears to have been very active coastal trade in ancient India. During the rule of the South Indian dynasties like the Cheras, Pandyas, and Cholas, Indian sea power extended its sway to Malaya, Indonesia, and Indo-China. According to Nilakantha Shastri, the South Indian rulers had conquered Ceylon. The main reason why ancient Indians did not take to high sea navigation in a big way was the fact that the country does not have deep inland seas nor navigable rivers in the peninsular parts of the country. "Movement," as C. S. Venkatachar writes, "has almost exclusively been on land from north to south." Nonetheless, India was the first country of the Indian Ocean to possess real battle fleets. In Chandragupta Maurya's time she had a Board of Admiralty with a Superintendent of Ships at its head. Later, in Akbar's days, the Mughal navy had an impressive strength of about 3,000 vessels. But during the later Mughals, its strength dwindled to 768 and it could not succeed in standing up to the European navy in the Indian Ocean. The Marathas took keen interest in developing a navy and troubled both the Mughals and the Portuguese on the sea. Indeed, Kanoji Angre was the most daring sea captain of his time. According to K. M. Panikkar, control of the Indian water remained in Indian hands even after the breakdown of the Chola naval power, till the arrival of the

Portuguese.[7] The Arabs, who succeeded after the decline of the Chola naval power, were only commercial navigators.

Beginning with the end of the seventh century A.D., the Arab navigators sailed in the west-east direction beyond India to Indonesia and distant China. The route to China which was thus opened by them remained in active use until the end of the ninth century. It was described at great length in an Arab nautical guidebook, *Silsilat-ae-Tawarikh*, written in the year 851 A.D. by an Arab traveller, Suleiman.[8] After *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, this is the second guidebook for navigation in the Indian Ocean. The Arabs sailed to Canton in 671 A.D. and also along the African coast. They had settlements in Madagascar and on the coast of Malabar and Gujarat in India. There were movements of people across the Indian Ocean in the opposite direction as well. that is, east to west. During the early centuries of the Christian era, a stream of emigrants from Indonesia crossed the Indian Ocean and reached the Somalian coast, and eventually mixed with the Africans. They made their way to Madagascar also. Again, in the 10th century A.D., there was another movement of people from east to west.[9]

China, though not a country of the Indian Ocean, has nevertheless been very closely linked with it in the past. According to Toussaint, the Indian Ocean might well have become a Chinese lake from 1200 to 1433 A.D.[10] This period saw the height of Chinese maritime activity in the Indian Ocean, after which they suddenly returned home turning their back on the sea. The Chinese were among the most daring navigators of the eastern region of the Indian Ocean. They sent out expeditions against Korea, Japan, and Annam during the reign of the Mongol ruler Kublai Khan. In the 13th century there were Chinese settlers in Quilon and Calicut. Marco Polo, who in 1291, by order of Kublai

Khan, accompanied a Mongol princess as far as Iran by sea, testified that the Chinese ships were the largest with a capacity of transporting up to a thousand persons.[11]

The Ming dynasty of China continued Kublai Khan's policies with greater success, and for some time it managed to dominate the Indian Ocean. Between 1405 and 1431 A.D., the Chinese sent seven naval expenditions to the Indian Ocean. The first (1405-7) comprised 63 vessels and 27,870 men. It was a complete success. Its objectives, as well as the objectives of the second expedition whch followed it (1407-9), were Java, Ceylon, and Calicut. The third Chinese expedition (1409-11) consisted of 48 vessels and 30,000 men. It met strong resistance in Ceylon but succeeded in bringing back the King of Ceylon and his courtiers as prisoners to China. Ceylon continued to pay tribute to China until 1439.[12] In their fourth expedition (1413-15) the Chinese went as far as the Maldive islands and the port of Ormuz on the Persian Gulf, and in the fifth (1417-19), sixth (1421-22) and seventh (1431-33) expeditions, the Chinese Admiral Cheng Ho (incidentally, a eunuch) went still farther, to Aden and several ports on the east coast of Africa. According to Toussaint, more than 30 ports in the Indian Ocean received a visit from the Chinese sailors, and "everywhere all that they asked was eagerly granted".[13] The Chinese Navy withdrew from the Indian Ocean in the middle of the 15th century, never to return.

A little later, the Portuguese appeared in the Indian Ocean. Within 15 years of the rounding of the Cape they were in control of all the key points in the Indian Ocean overcoming the strong joint resistance by the Arabs and the Indians. Vasco da Gama set foot on Indian soil at Calicut in May 1498. In their first encounter, the naval forces of the

Egyptians and the Zamorin of Calicut beat the Portuguese in 1507, but they were later defeated at Diu.[14] Albuquerque conquered Goa and destroyed the Arab fleet at Ormuz. The Portuguese also captured the island of Socotra. In 1538 the Turks captured Aden after a clash with the Portuguese.

Asia's maritime supremacy in the Indian Ocean came to an end towards the close of the 15th century. For the next 300 years, the history of the Indian Ocean was one of trade rivalries and armed struggle among the Western Powers. The Portuguese were followed in the Indian Ocean by the Dutch, the English, the Danes and the French. The first English sailor to enter the Indian Ocean was Francis Drake. He entered through the Pacific by the strait of Magellan. The Danes landed at Tanjore. When Portuguese supremacy came to an end with the seizure of Malacca by the Dutch in 1641, three European powers—the Dutch, the English, and the French—were contending for the control of the Indian Ocean.

The latter half of the 17th century saw a short revival of the sea power of the oriental peoples. In 1648, the Arabs of Oman drove the Portuguese out of Muscat and raided Diu and Daman. Towards the close of the century, the Arabs seized Mombassa, Zanzibar and Pemba. Later they clashed with the Persians from whom they snatched most of the islands of the Persian Gulf. The same period also saw the rise of the Maratha navy. The decline of the great Asian states during the 18th century handicapped their rise as maritime powers, with the result that the gifted Maratha and Arab sailors, as also the sailors of Arakan, Malay and Madagascar, took to piracy. The first American expedition to the Indian Ocean dates back to 1784. Two years later American ships reached the Isle de France (Mauritius) and India for trade in spices and tea.

By 1815, both the Dutch and the French had lost their main possessions in the Indian Ocean. The British, on the other hand, had seized the greater part of the region—India, Ceylon, the Cape of Good Hope, part of Malaya, the Isle de France, and finally Australia. The Anglo-French struggle which commenced with the War of Austrian Succession (1740-48), continued through the Seven Years War.(1756-63), the War of American Independence (1778-83), and the Revolutionary War (1793-1802), ending only with the defeat of the French in the Napoleonic Wars (1803-15). The British, occupying Singapore in 1819 and Aden in 1839, established the "most absolute hegemony of all times" in the Indian Ocean. Next to the discovery of the Cape route by the Portuguese, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 is the most important event in the history of the Indian Ocean. With it the old prominence of Western Asia was restored.

During the First World War, the Indian Ocean did not become an important theatre of operation. Hostilities were confined to two areas only—the Middle East and East Africa, and the German submarines, so active in European waters did not extend their operations to the Indian Ocean. The post World War I period saw many significant changes in the Indian Ocean. The Middle East region, whose importance rose due to the substitution of oil for coal as the chief source of power, changed hands from the Turks to the British. The Washington Treaties of 1921 put an end to the naval hegemony of Britain and put the American Navy on a level of equality with the British Navy. Yet the British maintained their domination of the Indian Ocean. A British firm secured the control of all cable lines in the Indian Ocean, and Britain strengthened her naval bases a Simonstown, Trincomalee, and Singapore. The post war national awakening in Asia also added to the importance of the Indian Ocean region.

In the Second World War the Indian Ocean was the scene of greater naval activity than during the First World War. In August 1940, the Italian forces moved into Somaliland, which resulted in a clash with the British. The Allies sent their reinforcements to Russia via the Persian Gulf, and there was joint Anglo-Russian action in Iran to prevent Reza Shah from taking sides with the Axis powers. In the eastern region of the Indian Ocean the Japanese navy attacked Java. As Singapore fell into Japanese hands, the British Navy withdrew to Mombasa. The Japanese Navy occupied the Indian islands of Andaman and Nicobar and conducted a raid on Colombo. It was the defeat of the Japanese in the Coral Sea at the hands of the American Navy which saved the Indian Ocean from falling under Japanese control. In 1942, the heart of the Indian Ocean was the scene of naval action against Madagascar, which declined to join the Allies after the fall of France to Nazi Germany.

The period following the Second World War witnessed a veritable upsurge of national freedom in the Indian Ocean area. The colonial powers of Europe had to withdraw from India, Burma, Ceylon, and other countries of South East Asia and East Africa. This highly welcome process of decolonization is being used in certain circles to propagate the myth of a vacuum in the Indian Ocean which, as they suggest, the United States must fill together with her Asian allies, to stall Russian domination of the region. The fact, however, is that the Americans desire to acquire a firm foothold in the Indian Ocean not because it is threatened by increased Soviet naval activity, but because its location to the south of the Soviet Union ideally suits them for the placement of theii underwater long range missiles. This new strategic importance of the Indian Ocean has made it a ful-

crum of power struggle in our times. The concept that the primary arena of a future war would be the Atlantic, Pacific, and the Arctic since the rival power centres—both present and future—are pitted across these oceans, and only "residual influences" would reach the Indian Ocean, is fast changing under the impact of the new nuclear strategy.

NOTES

[1] Auguste Toussaint, *History of the Indian Ocean*, Translated from French, London, 1966, pp. 5-6.

[2] *Ibid.* According to Villiers the total area of the waters of the Indian Ocean is roughly 27,000,000 square miles (Alan Villiers, *The Indian Ocean*, London, 1952, p. 15).

[3] See A.P.S. Bindra, "The Indian Ocean as seen by an Indian," *Proceedings, U.S. Naval Institute*, May 1970, Vol. 96, No. 5, pp. 178-87.

[4] A. Toussaint, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

[6] See R. K. Mookerji, *Indian Shipping*, London, 1912, pp. 19-31. But a British scholar, A. L. Basham, writes: "Certain over-enthusiastic Indian scholars have perhaps made too much of the achievement of ancient Indian seafarers, which cannot compare with those of the Vikings or of some other maritime peoples." (*The Wonder That Was India*, London, 1954, p. 226). According to C.S. Venkatachar, "There is very little of traditional lore and literature about sea and sea-faring. The majestic Himalayas have exercised a great fascination on the mind and imagination of the people of India." ("Sea Power in the Indian Ocean," *Eastern Economist*, Pamphlets, 1953, pp. 1-2).

[7] K. M. Panikkar, *India and the Indian Ocean*, London, 1945, p. 14.

[8] A. Toussaint, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 53.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 74.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 77.

[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 77-9.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 79.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 104.

CHAPTER TWO

BRITISH POLICY EAST OF SUEZ

During the Second World War and in the period immediately following it, the Western colonial powers, including Britain, did their best to preserve and even extend their colonial empires. In the course of the war, Britain imposed many curbs on the sovereignty of Ethiopia and occupied several parts of it. Great efforts were made after the end of the war by the British in Burma and Malaya, the British and the Dutch in Indonesia, the British and the French in Indo-China, and by the United States in the Philippines and Korea, to restore their colonial rule which was badly shaken during the war. In their wars against the peoples of Indonesia, Indo-China, and Malaya, the British, French, and Dutch colonialists helped one another. They also made use of American economic and military aid.

But even their herculean effort could not reverse the tide of the national liberation movement of the peoples of Asia and Africa. A feature of the disintegration of Western colonialism in Asia was that it gave up its political domination in some countries to concentrate on others. Britain was the only metropolitan country which tried to save her empire by reconstructing it in the post war period. Their great experience in colonial rule stood them in good stead in this matter. The essence of British colonial tactics lay in opposing the forces of the national liberation movement

where it was possible, and coming to terms where it was not possible to oppose them because of insufficient strength. In the initial stages notable successes were achieved by the British strategy of neo-colonialism. The political constitutions of the new states were framed in Westminster. Where a strong national movement prevented them from handing over power to representatives of reactionary forces, as was done in the Middle East after the First World War, they handed it over to representatives of the national bourgeoisie having close ties with Britain. In some cases the old device of parttition was used, as in the case of India, to weaken both the successor states and engage them in a perpetual conflict.

The British policy of East of Suez withdrawal by the end of 1971, announced by the Labour Government in 1968, and the great efforts made by Britain to enter the European Economic Community, convey the impression that Britain is about to turn her back to the Indian Ocean and Asia. This is, however, not true. A reappraisal of Britain's role in the world has been going on ever since the fiasco of Britain's Suez adventure in 1956. According to a British scholar, Michael Howard, "Sir Winston Churchill drew the proper conclusion from the statistics of megaton destruction and ordered the evacuation of the Canal Zone."[1] But having withdrawn from the Suez, the British clung to Cyprus, Kenya, and Aden as new centres of British military power. They devised a political structure in South Arabia to make their hold on Aden more secure when it became clear that Cyprus and Kenya would "consume more security than they could ever produce". Simultaneously, in South East Asia the Malaysian Federation was inaugurated "to provide a workable framework for the base at Singapore".[2] Howard criticizes the British policy makers for not having foreseen 15 years ago that the political problems caused by large fixed bases in developing

countries would increase as fast as their military utility, in the nuclear age, would diminish."

Britain's announcement of withdrawal from East of Suez is only a change in tactics and does not mean that Britain would have no role to play in Asia. In his address to the Royal Central Asian Society on 13 March 1968, Sir Esler Dening, formerly of the Foreign Service and Chairman of the Council of the Royal Central Asian Society, denied that the decision for military withdrawal from South East Asia and the Persian Gulf signified "that we consider ourselves as no longer having a role to play in Asia as a whole." Sir Dening said:

> I think we should do well to consider whether, in the long run, it is wise to maintain British forces indefinitely in bases on foreign soil which are only secure as long as the governments who have desired their presence remain in power. . . . We have felt obliged to withdraw our forces at short notice in circumstances by no means favourable to us.[3]

Britain has thus decided on a timely withdrawal from her bases on the Asian mainland, and concentrate on sparsely populated islands in the Indian Ocean where she would not be threatened by militant national movements. She also intends to rely on South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Singapore, and the proposed Federation of Persian Gulf Shaikhdoms, for military cooperation in carrying out her designs in the Indian Ocean.

Asia remains an area of vital interest to Britain despite the liquidation of her vast colonial empire. R. Palme Dutt points out:

> It must be remembered that the biggest British monopolies conduct their main operations overseas, while they

> have their headquarters in London, so that their profits, apart from the special case of oil, are treated as British home profits.[4]

Great monopolies like Imperial Chemical Industries, with £1,221 million capital and £102 million profits in 1966, or Unilever, the overlord of Africa, with £504 million capital and £57 million profits in 1966, are really the biggest colonial exploiters. Most of the top ten companies listed in the 1967 *Times* annual survey were directly or dominantly based on overseas capital assets, which rose from £3,000 million at the end of the war to £17,000 million in 1967.[5] Even after taking into account the reduction in the value of money through continuous governmental inflation, the amount is still an impressively high one. The *Financial Times* of 19 December 1966 wrote: "It is seldom realized that income earned abroad by U.K. compaines has now reached two-fifths of the profits earned at home."

Julian Amery, writing in the *Reporter* of 11 December 1966, underlined the great economic importance of Asia for Britain. According to him some two-thirds of Britain's ovearseas investments are east of Suez. So is two-thirds of its trade. The British investment in India and Pakistan is immense. The Middle East is Britain's main supplier of oil. Australia is an important trading partner of Britain. South African gold, diamonds, and uranium, writes Amery, make it "the Fort Knox of the sterling area". Malaysian rubber and tin are also important for Britain.

The situation is not likely to change even with Britain's impending membership of the European Economic Community. It will be only after January 1973 that the British membership will be a fact, and provisions of the Treaty of Rome will begin to take effect. "Yet," writes Eric Ford in

the *Far Eastern Economic Review* of 18 September 1971, "it would be wrong to conclude that even then there will be any loss of British interest in trade with Asia." In fact, there has been a 26 per cent increase in British exports to Singapore and 10 per cent in imports. The British companies continue to regard South East Asia as an attractive area for investment prospects which also provides a springboard to surrounding Asian markets. Of the total British overseas investments, 10 per cent (£686 million) are in Singapore and Malaysia alone, and the return from them, coupled with proceeds from trade, make a significant contribution to the British economy.[6] British monopolies like Shell and Unilever are currently taking interest in oil refining and timber extraction in Indonesia, which after Soekarno's fall, has become "an up-and-coming Mecca for future British investments".[7] The total British private investment in the Persian Gulf area and South East Asia is estimated to be over £ 1,000 million, bringing the investors £ 300 million yearly.[8]

By adopting for the time being "a low military profile" in Asia, the British are only biding time. They expect the wave of anti-colonialism to recede, and are waiting for the moment when the South East Asian and West Asian statesmen will be ready to cooperate with the West. The process of decolonization is viewed by them as "a certain *malaise*" which is "like eating too much too fast which results in flatulence and indigestion with spells of dizziness and outbursts of ill temper. . . . The pace will slacken and the turbulence subside."[9]

After their withdrawal from the Suez Canal zone in 1956, the British continued to make use of their bases in Aden and Singapore for consolidating their hold on East Africa and South East Asia. In 1964 the Aden base was fully used

for action against the freedom movement in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. Till as late as 1966, the Labour government, like the Conservative government before it, stressed the traditional "East of Suez" British policy as the pivot of British overseas strategy. In June 1964, before entering office, Harold Wilson had emphasized "Britain's important role East of Suez", and declared, "A thousand soldiers stationed East of Suez make a greater contribution to the cause of preservation of peace than a thousand soldiers stationed in Germany." The 1966 Defence Estimates had stated that "the Far East and South East Asia are the regions where in the coming decade there may arise the most serious threat to peace," and Foreign Secretary George Brown had also declared that "Britain cannot stand aloof" in the "East of Suez" region. In 1966, Wilson, answering the critics of the "East of Suez" strategy, had declared, "If Britain leaves the area it will mean that we leave Asia to three main powers: China, the United States and the Soviet Union."

In 1967, however, the failure of the British military effort to hold Aden, its enforced evacuation, and the accompanying critical balance of payments situation which led to devaluation in November, forced a partial retreat from the old world strategy of Britain. The Labour government announced on 16 January 1968, that in the interests of the economy, British armed forces would be withdrawn from eastern Asia (except Hong Kong) by 1971.

In fact, the old system of land bases with garrisons had proved untenable in the face of resistance by the local population, which led to the abandonment of one base after another. In the new strategic system devised by Britain to meet a changed situation created by the upsurge of national movements on the Asian mainland, and economic stringency due to an unfavourable balance of payments, the

Indian Ocean islands have been marked out for a key role. These remote and virtually uninhabited ocean islands will serve as a series of landing stages for troops, and fuelling and communication centres. Another reason for the preference for island bases is the recent experience of the Americans in the Vietnam war. As Brigadier C. N. Barclay wrote, "Experience has shown that it is better to fight Asiatic communities on the sea and in the air, where they are weak, rather than on land where they are strong."[10]

The Anglo-American plan to establish bases on the islands in the Indian Ocean antedates the announcement in 1968 of the British decision to withdraw from "East of Suez". As early as August 1964, an Anglo-American team made a joint survey of the Indian Ocean to select islands for military bases. Under an agreement with the Maldives, signed on 26 July 1965, Britain secured "virtually sovereign use" of the Gan island, a World War II British base till 15 December 1985. Among the military facilities available in the Gan is an airfield with advanced navigational aids. The airfield provides a much needed staging post between Europe and Australia.

On 10 November 1965, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Anthony Greenwood, announced in the House of Commons that the British government had decided to set up a new colony known as the British Indian Ocean Territory (B.I.O.T.) in the western region of the Indian Ocean. The B.I.O.T. comprised the islands of Aldabra, Farquhar, and Desroches from the Seychelles groups of Islands—a British colony acquired from Napoleon in 1810—and the Chagos Archipelago—a dependency of Mauritius. The total population of the B.I.O.T. is just less than 1,400 (1,000 in Chagos and about 400 in the other three islands) which the British propose to depopulate in order to avoid trouble. The British

extracted from Mauritius, in the face of U.N. opposition, an agreement to use Chagos as a base. They paid in return a £3 million cheque to Sir Seewoosagur's government. As compensation for the loss of the three islands, they made a gift of a £3 mllion civil airport at Mahe, the capital of the Seychelles.

In December 1966, Britain entered into an agreement with the United States, making available to the latter the B.I.O.T. for use as joint bases for 50 years. Britain was planning to build an airfield and a harbour as a military staging base on Aldabra island, 400 kilometres north west of Madagascar and some 650 kilometres off the East African coast. Ecologists and naturalists were, however, outraged by the idea, which they feared threatened some of the world's rarest wild life, including the last two surviving colonies of the giant land tortoise, the pink-footed booby, the flightless rail, and other unique animals and plants. An expedition by the Royal Society reported that the uninhabited atoll had a "unique ecology" virtually undisturbed by man. The Aldabra plan was shelved not so much in the interests of ecology, but as an economy measure following Britain's devaluation of the pound late in 1967.

In early 1970, the United States Congress voted $5.4 million for building a base in Diego Garcia in the Chagos Archipelago, in the middle of the Indian Ocean about 1,400 miles from the Indian coast. Construction work on this base began in March 1971. The project when completed is expected to cost $19 million. It will be manned by 250 U.S. naval personnel. By another agreement concluded in 1967, the United States is already entitled to the use of the island of Mahe, the principal island in the Seychelles group, for satellite tracking and telemetry facilities. The United States has since set up a station in the island.

The establishment of Anglo-American military bases on the Indian Ocean islands has been viewed with serious concern by states of the region. Speaking in the U.N. General Assembly on 8 October 1969, the Ceylonese delegate referred to them as "disturbing trends" and declared that "developments of this kind are not calculated to promote security and ease tensions". The State Department explanation that the setting up of communication centres by the United States did not amount to establishment of military bases, was not accepted by the External Affairs Minister of India, Dinesh Singh, who told the Rajya Sabha on 18 December 1969, that India was as much opposed to the setting up of refuelling or communication bases in the Indian Ocean as the establishment of military bases. The Indian and Ceylonese officials during their talks held in Colombo in January 1970, expressed concern at the establishment of so-called staging posts and telecommunication facilities in the Indian Ocean area. The Indonesian Foreign Minister, Adam Malik, stated in Djakarta on 7 March 1970, that Indonesia could not see any justification for foreign bases in the Indian Ocean and appealed to the major powers as well as the regional nations to see that the Indian Ocean was allowed to remain a neutral zone.[11]

In the new island strategy of Britain in the Indian Ocean, the Royal Navy would not be as important as before, for the cost accountants gave their verdict against it and in favour of the Royal Air Force. According to a knowledgeable British commentator, Dick Wilson, bombers based on a string of islands stretching from Africa to Australia, from Diego Garcia to the Cocos island, would play a key role in the new strategy for the 1970s and 1980s.[12] The strategists of the Whitehall feel that weapons development over the coming years might well increase the vulnerability of the carriers, and the relative

costs favour the R.A.F. At one time Britain was thinking of switching over to the FIII A supersonic fighter bombers to be operated from the island bases. Their effective combat coverage could be measured by drawing circles of a 1,000 miles radius from each of the proposed island bases. Such circles, wrote Dick Wilson, if drawn around Aldabra, Diego Garcia, Gan and Cocos islands, would provide a belt of operation covering most of the East African coast, the whole of Southern India and Ceylon, Malaya, Sumatra, Java and part of Kalimantan. The eastern-most circle around Cocos would link up with similar circles drawn around Darwin and Freemantle in Australia.[13]

Despite her formal decision to withdraw by the end of 1971, Britain still remains militarily involved in the affairs of the Indian Ocean. Besides her membership of military pacts like SEATO and CENTO, she has a defence pact with Mauritius. An agreement with the latter provides for the continuation of existing facilities for Britain in the island, such as the use of the airport and of naval communications. By an Exchange of Letters with Muscat and Oman in 1958, Britain would enjoy for an indefinite period, facilities to use Masirah island off the south east Arabian coast as a staging post. According to the 1968 Defence White Paper, this staging post is to be retained as a British link even after the pull-out of British forces from the Persian Gulf area by the end of 1971. Britain has also got the right to station forces and keep bases in Malaysia by the Anglo-Malaysian Defence Agreement of 1963. By the Exchange of Letters of 30 June 1955, Britain is entitled to the use of the South African naval base of Simonstown during both peace time as well as war, irrespective of South Africa's involvement. Even the allies of Britain are authorized to use the Simonstown base in times of war. Under an agreement concluded

in 1964, Britain can send her troops to Kenya for "normal training". Recently, in January 1971, about 700 British troops were reported to have arrived in Kenya.[14]

With the advent of the Conservatives in power, the lingering doubts about the sincerity of British declarations about the pull-out from "East of Suez" were further strengthened. The former British Prime Minister, Sir Alec Douglas Home, had said in Kuala Lumpur on 10 March 1970, that a Conservative government would ensure a British presence in the region "in the military sense". Earlier, on 9 March, he had declared in Singapore, "We will certainly have a naval presence in South East Asia."[15]

Britain's current strategic thinking is to forge a five-power alliance in South East Asia. A five-power conference (Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore and U.K.) held in Canberra on 19-20 June 1969, decided to held a major combined exercise in 1970. It also decided to continue joint exercises in the period beyond 1971 and establish a Commonwealth Jungle Warfare Centre. The governments of Australia and New Zealand have announced their intention to continue stationing their armed forces in Malaysia and Singapore. Australia and New Zealand will each keep one naval vessel near Malaysia, and both countries will together contribute two battalion of troops to be stationed in this region.

Recently, the Ministers of the governments of Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore and the United Kingdom, met in London on 15 and 16 April 1971. The Conference noted the view of the United Kingdom government that the nature of its commitments under the Anglo-Malaysian defence agreement required review and that the agreement should be replaced by new political arrangements.[16] According to the communique issued at the end of the meeting, the

five powers declared that

> their governments would continue to cooperate in accordance with their respective policies in the field of defence after the termination of the agreement (Anglo-Malaysian Defence Agreement) on 1 November 1971.

The Ministers agreed to establish an air defence council comprising one senior representative of each of the five nations. They also noted the progress made by the five-power naval advisory working group and decided to set up a joint consultative council to provide a forum for regular consultation at the senior official level on matters relating to defence arrangements.[17]

Thus an understanding has been reached between the five powers to consult together to decide what measures should be taken jointly or separately in the event of any form of armed attack externally organized or supported, or the threat of such an attack against Malaysia or Singapore. Details regarding accommodation of and training facilities for the British, Australian and New Zealand forces to be stationed in the area were to be worked out before the expiry of the Anglo-Malaysian agreement in November 1971. According to Lord Carrington, the British Defence Secretary who presided at the London meeting, it was always in the British government's mind to reverse the decision of the previous administration to leave this area altogether since his visit to the four other capitals last July. The British presence will consist of a battalion group, six frigates, four or five Nimrod maritime reconnaissance aircraft, a squadron of whirlwind helicopters, plus a continuing commitment of other combat units training in the area, and visits by ships of the Royal Navy and

Royal Air Force aircraft.[18]

Similarly, Britain is gradually reversing her policy of withdrawal by 1971 in the Persian Gulf region too. The 1 March 1970 statement of the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Alec Douglas Home, is a significant pointer in this direction. While declaring that British operational forces were proposed to be withdrawn from the Persian Gulf by the end of 1971, Home left a loophole by adding that the "future presence of British troops in the Gulf will depend on whether they are wanted by the projected Union of Arab Emirates."[19] Sir Alec has offered the member rulers a five-point programme of support which includes a treaty of friendship, and provision for officers and other personnel to train and equip the UAE army. It is proposed to station locally on a continuing basis, military training teams to help train the projected UAE Army. The Royal Navy warships would be visiting the area regularly.[20]

The British objective of dominating the Indian Ocean remains unchanged despite the fact that the countries bordering it are no longer under their rule. Under the present changed correlation of forces, only the strategy has been changed and Britain no longer aims at domination of the region single-handed. But she is trying to achieve it in co-operation with her allies among whom the racist regime of South Africa holds an important place.

Brushing aside the strong and vociferous protests by the Afro-Asian members of the Commonwealth and brazenly flouting the U.N. resolution, the Conservatives have decided to resume shipments of British arms to South Africa under the 1955 Simonstown Agreement.[21] The old bogey of Russian expansion and the Soviet Navy's threat to the oceanic route around the Cape has been invoked to justify this decision. While the statement of Conservative British Prime

Minister, Heath, at the Singapore Commonwealth Prime Minister's Conference, implied that the currents of the Indian Ocean were turning red, the Afro-Asian littoral states, as India's Foreign Minister, Swaran Singh, stated, were "far more concerned at the growth of South African military power than at any hypothetical Soviet threat".[22] In fact, their fears have since come true with the South African invasion of Zambian territory in October 1971.

Competent Indian and Afro-Asian observers do not believe the British canard about the Soviet naval threat to the Indian Ocean. As Francis Hope wrote in the *New Statesman* of 26 February 1971, "The United Kingdom's sudden discovery of a Russian naval threat in the Indian Ocean is something of a joke throughout Asia at the moment."[23] V. R. Bhatt, London correspondent of the *Hindustan Times* writes, "The Soviets, even according to British official and unofficial expert evidence, do not have a naval presence in the Indian Ocean capable of producing, now or in the near future, the kind of situation the British government fears."[24] A British Minister of State for Defence, Kirk, after a visit to Singapore in October 1970, declared publicly that the Soviet presence in the region was not of a size to worry the West seriously or call for a redeployment. A seminar on Soviet capability held by the Royal United Services Institution, came to the conclusion that because of the West's naval predominance, the Soviet Navy today did not have the capacity to sustain general naval operations at a great distance from Soviet shores.[25]

Another Indian commentator, defence specialist Rathy Sawhny, a retired Brigadier of the Indian Army, wrote in the *Indian Express*:

There is no gainsaying the fact that recent years have

> witnessed a very marked increase in the Soviet Union's naval and maritime presence in the Indian Ocean and its littoral. It does not, however, necessarily follow that British interests in the region are significantly threatened or that resumption of arms sales to South Africa would in fact be a good method of safeguarding those interests.[26]

In fact, such eminent British authorities on defence as Lawrence Martin, Professor of War Studies at King's College, University of London, have examined the Soviet naval threat to the Cape route and dismissed it as groundless. Martin wrote: "...honesty compels me to declare that the case on grounds of British security is not so strong."[27] According to him, in the case of an all-out war with strategic nuclear weapons, "we shall have a good deal more to worry about, briefly, than the Cape route", and even in the highly hypothetical event of a large and insulated war dragging on without necessarily precipitating a nuclear war, it is doubtful whether Russia would, if she wanted to strangle Western shipping, choose to do so off the Cape. In Martin's opinion, "For logistical reasons she would more probably attack it either at its sources in the Arabian Sea or off the bulge of West Africa and on the approaches to Europe."

Lord Chalfont, once Defence Correspondent of the *Times* (London) and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, had himself admitted in a debate on maritime strategy in the House of Lords on 12 June 1968:

> There is no evidence that this increased Soviet deployment represents a danger—certainly not now and...not in future either—to commercial shipping routes through the area or to other United Kingdom interests.[28]

Obviously then, Britain is helping South Africa to become a strong military power for reasons other than security. South Africa is important for Britain in her neo-colonial designs to forge a multi-lateral police force in the Indian Ocean to safeguard her economic interests in Asia and Africa which are threatened by nationalist forces. Sir Alec Douglas Home has openly stated that the Simonstown Agreement was intended in effect to become "an informal extension of the NATO defences".[29] One comes across the demand for the NATO "hoist in" in the Indian Ocean in the columns of British defence magazines.[30] South Africa, which already is militarily stronger than any other African state on the coast of the Indian Ocean (she has a naval force of 2 helicopter carrying destroyers, 6 frigates, and 5 submarines,[31] besides an airforce of 210 combat aircraft including 36 Mirage III), is also being helped by France in procuring sophisticated military hardware. The French, who have a strong naval base at Diego Suarez in Madagascar, have held joint naval exercises with South Africa.

The South African government, as stated by Prime Minister Vorster in the Assembly on 23 April 1969, was carrying on negotiations "at the highest level in an attempt to fill the Indian Ocean power vacuum before the Royal Navy's withdrawal."[32] The South African Defence Minister, P. W. Botha, told the Assembly that an international conference on service level discussed South Africa's willingness to play a larger role in the so-called defence of the Cape route. The recommendations made included "some sort of alliance between Southern Hemisphere nations such as Argentina and Australia, both of whom have played host to squadrons of the South African navy in the past two years."

From the foregoing it is clear that Britain has not quite given up her desire to stay in the Indian Ocean. She now

aims at establishing joint control over it with her western ally, the U.S.A., South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand, and some South East Asian nations are also being cultivated by her for cooperation in this task. She is looking forward to the emergence of a Five Power Pact in South East Asia to replace the Anglo-Malaysian Defence Agreement. The Five Power Pact is expected to serve as "a sort of watch-tower for the region or even as erecting the scaffolding for a more ambitious regional defence arrangement."[33] Not long ago through South Korea and Taiwan, a trial baloon on a defence organization to be called Pacific and Asian Treaty Organization (PATO) was sent up. Attempts are being made to rejuvenate the SEATO. In May-June 1969, a joint naval exercise, "Sea Spirit", was held in which 64 ships took part. More recently in January 1971, Britain and Australia conducted another joint naval exercise, "Swan Lake", in which 17 ships and aircraft from three Commonwealth countries joined.[34]

Commenting on the British policy East of Suez, Soviet military observers Oleg Ivanov and Vasily Yefremov made an apt remark which deserves to be quoted. They wrote:

> The British custom of leaving without saying goodbye is notorious, but in politics Britain's ruling circles act differently: they keep saying goodbye with no intention of ever leaving, even where they have not been invited.[35]

The reversal of the Labour policy to withdraw from East of Suez has been acclaimed in Washington. The U.S. Secretary of State, William Rogers, at a press conference on 15 July 1970, described London's decision on the new policy East of Suez as "an important stabilizing factor in that area".[36]

NOTES

[1] Michael Howard, "Britain's Strategic Problem East of Suez," *International Affairs*, London, Vol. 42, No. 2, April 1966, p. 181.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] Sir Esler Dening, "A New Look at Asia," *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society*, Vol. IV, June 1968, Part II, p. 139.
[4] R. Palme Dutt, "Britain's Crisis of Neo-Colonialism," *International Affairs*, Moscow, January 1968, p. 18.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 17.
[6] *Far Eastern Economic Review*, No. 35, 28 August 1971, pp. 37-8.
[7] *Ibid.*
[8] V. Pavlovsk, "Imperialist Plans in the Indian Ocean," *New Times*, 13 January 1971, pp. 8-9.
[9] Sir Esler Dening, *op. cit.*, p. 136.
[10] C. N. Barclay, "Britain's Place in the Defence of South East Asia," *Navy*, November 1968, Vol. 73, No. 11, p. 382.
[11] "India in World Strategic Environment," *Annual Review*, 1969-70, I.D.S.A., New Delhi, April 1970, p. 258.
[12] *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 28 July 1966, p. 151.
[13] *Ibid.*, p. 153. The proposal to acquire F111s has again been revived. According to Australian press reports, Australia is likely to buy 24 F111s from America (*Australian*, 23 October 1971).
[14] *News Review on Countries Bordering India*, I.D.S.A., New Delhi, February 1971, p. 37.
[15] *Annual Review* 1969-70, I.D.S.A., New Delhi, April 1970, p. 255.
[16] *Vikrant*, New Delhi, Vol. 1, No. 8, May 1971, p. 16.
[17] *Ibid.*
[18] *Ibid.*, p. 15.
[19] *News Review on Countries Bordering India*, I.D.S.A., New Delhi, April 1971, pp. 30-31.
[20] *Ibid.*
[21] The former British Prime Minister, Wilson, has come out with a categorical statement that there is no legal or moral requirement under the Simonstown Agreement for Britain to supply arms.
[22] *The Times of India*, 16 January 1971.
[23] Francis Hope, "Captain Heath's Flotilla," *New Statesman*, 26 February 1971, p. 264.
[24] V. R. Bhatt, "The Indian Ocean Alibi," *Hindustan Times*, 17 October 1970.
[25] *Ibid.*
[26] Rathy Sawhny, "U.K. Arms for South Africa," *Indian Express*,

8 January 1971.

[27] Lawrence Martin, "The Cape Route," *The Listener*, London, 23 July 1970. Reprinted in *Survival*, London, October 1970, pp. 347-51.

[28] *Hansard*, Fifth series, Vol. 293, No. 93 Cols. 187-88.

[29] *Annual Review*, 1969-70, I.D.S.A., New Delhi, April 1970, p. 257.

[30] See *Navy*, London, January 1969, p. 9.

[31] *Jane's Fighting Ships 1970-71*, p. 276. Three more French Daphne class submarines are currently under construction in South Africa.

[32] *Cape Times*, 24 April 1969.

[33] Coral Bell, "The Indian Ocean: An Australian Evaluation," p. 19, a paper submitted to Georgetown University International Conference on Indian Ocean, April 1971.

[34] Vice Admiral B. B. Schofield, "Maritime Affairs," *The Army Quarterly and Defence Journal*, Vol. 101, No. 3 April 1971.

[35] *Soviet Military Review*, September 1970.

[36] *Ibid.*

CHAPTER THREE

SUPER POWERS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

BOGEY OF SOVIET NAVAL THREAT

Historically speaking, the bogey of Soviet naval threat to the security of the Indian Ocean, raised in our days by many western publicists, can be linked to the late 19th and early 20th century bogey of the Russian menace to Indian security which was sedulously cultivated by British imperialist circles as a cover for their own aggression against Afghanistan, and justification for their forward policy in Central Asia. Harping on this bogey, the British converted India into "the base and bastion" of their power in the whole of Asia and East Africa. They used India as a springboard for further colonial conquests and waged aggressive wars in the Sudan, Egypt, Abyssinia, Afghanistan, Burma, Tibet and China, using Indian soldiers and imposing their cost on India. The British continued to harp on the bogey of Russian advance even after the overthrow of the Tsarist rule. As Jawaharlal Nehru wrote in 1928:

> For long years past, the bogey of a Russian invasion has been held up to us and has been made the excuse of vast expenditure on our armaments. In the days of the Tsar we were told that the imperialism of Russia was forever driving south, coveting an outlet to the sea, or may be

> India itself. The Tsar has gone... and we are now told that India is threatened by the Soviet government.[1]

It is not surprising that currently the "threat" of Soviet naval expansion in the Indian Ocean should be used to justify the Anglo-American military presence in the area.

The draft of a secret Protocol proposed by Nazi Germany to the Soviet Union in November 1940, is widely quoted as evidence of the Soviet desire to acquire a foothold in the Indian Ocean. Article 4 of this Draft Protocol stated, "The Soviet Union declares that its territorial aspirations centre south of the national territory of the Soviet Union in the direction of the Indian Ocean."[2] This article has often been used in a distorted manner to attribute aggressive motives to the Soviet Union in the Indian Ocean. But the same State Department publication contains documents which go to prove beyond any doubt that the Soviet Union never contemplated an arrangement with Nazi Germany about the Indian Ocean. The draft of this undated Protocol was found in the secret files of the German Embassy in Moscow and it is guessed that it formed the basis for the German Ambassador Schulenburg's conversation with Molotov on 26 November 1940.[3] In fact, the idea of a secret agreement establishing "the focal points in the territorial aspirations" of four powers—Germany, Italy, Japan and the Soviet Union—was first mooted out by the Reich Foreign Minister, Ribbentrop, in his conversation with the Soviet Foreign Minister, Molotov, in Berlin on 13 November.[4] On being reminded by Ribbentrop that he "owed him an answer to the question of whether the Soviet Union was in principle sympathetic to the idea of obtaining an outlet to the Indian Ocean", Molotov gave an evasive reply that "on this point, he could not take a

definitive stand at this time".[5]

An impartial and unbiased observer cannot fail to view the emergence of the Soviet Union as a strong maritime power in the post war period in its correct perspective, and dismiss the scare about *Pax Sovietica* as false and unfounded. The need to objectively examine the meaning and purpose of Soviet naval development has been stressed by many well-informed specialists in the West as well. Andrew Wilson thus wrote in the *Observer* of 12 September 1971:

> The idea of Russia moving, often haphazardly, from one strategic posture to another, mainly for the sake of her own security, runs counter to the picture presented by most Western naval lobbyists, who tend to ascribe to every Russian move a far-sighted expansionist political aim. It is an idea that needs to be objectively examined if one seeks, as one must do, to distinguish between intentions and capabilities on the part of a nation that now has the second largest navy in the world.

There is no doubt that since the end of World War II, both the Soviet Navy as well as the merchant marine have been developing in general in an unprecedented manner, and not merely in the Indian Ocean. Beginning just as an arm of the Red Army, the Soviet Navy developed to acquire an autonomous character in 1960. The following year it held its first open-sea exercise in the Norwegian sea. Naval exercises continued in 1964 in the far off Atlantic, and the Arab-Israel war brought the Soviet Navy into the Mediterranean. In 1970 the Soviet Navy staged one of its biggest exercises, OKEAN.

Since 1962, the progress of the Soviet Navy has been phenomenal. Its main strength lies in its submarine fleet

which consists of 318 conventional and 83 nuclear-powered submarines (totalling more than twice the number of vessels in the U.S. submarine fleet).[6] But in this vast Soviet submarine fleet, the Y class submarines, which, like the U.S. Polaris, have 16 tubes for launching missiles, are only 17. Another 15 Y class submarines are in various stages of assembly and fitting out. According to a report on national security by the U.S. Secretary of Defence, Melvin R. Laird, only in 1974 will the operational force of Soviet Y class submarines compare in size with the current U.S. Polaris force.[7] By that time, however, the U.S. would have converted her Polaris submarines into Poseidom-carrying submarines with missiles having a range of about 2,900 miles as against the 1,725 miles of the Polaris. A sum of $803 million has been earmarked for this conversion programme which is expected to be complete by 1974.[8] Two newly built helicopter carriers, *Moskva* and *Leningrad*, have also been commissioned. With 200 destroyers, frigates and escorts, the Soviet Union is inferior in terms of units to the U.S. Navy which has 557 such vessels. Even in the cruiser force the U.S.A. enjoys superiority over the Soviet Union (32 against the latter's 25).[9] Yet Soviet vessels have this advantage over their American counterparts—they are more modern. But the Soviet Union lacks aircraft carriers of which America has 33. Furthermore, the Soviet Marine Corps of 12,000 is very modest as compared to America's 300,000 with their special training in strategic operations.[10]

Alongside the growth of the Soviet Navy, the Soviet merchant marine has also made rapid strides. By the end of 1968 the Soviet Union had the sixth largest national flag fleet in the world. At about 10 million gross tons, it was almost half as large as the U.K. fleet and growing at the rate of about a million tons a year.[11]

The transformation of the Soviet Union—a land colossus—into a formidable maritime power is but a logical corollary to her emergence since World War II as a major power, which made it incumbent upon her to catch up with the United States on the sea. A world wide operational fleet is indispensable to a concept of power on an international scale. After attaining parity with the United States in nuclear weapons, it was quite legitimate for the Soviet Union to concentrate on naval development, for in our nuclear age, technological developments have rendered land based strategic weapons of deterrence for less safe, and necessitated their transfer to the comparatively safer sea. This change in military strategy coupled with the rapidly increasing foreign trade, made the Soviet Union pay more attention to development of her navy and merchant marine.

It is incorrect to connect the rise of the Soviet Union as a sea power to the U.S. blockade of Cuba in 1962. As Philip Hanson has pointed out, the largest annual percentage increase in the Soviet fleet in 1962, 1963, and 1964 must have involved placing the orders long before the Cuban crisis, for it takes rather long to build ships.[12] Moreover, as the above-mentioned writer has shown, in proportionate terms at least, there had already been an almost equally large growth of tonnage in 1959. Hence the main explanation for the rise of Soviet shipping lies in the growth of Soviet trade with the West and the countries of the Third World, both in volume and in geographical extent. This trade has risen very rapidly from the mid 1950s. Moreover, the dependence of the Soviet Union's foreign trade on sea transport has risen from an exceptionally low level. Whereas for the world as a whole, about three-quarters of the total foreign trade moves by sea, for the Soviet Union the corresponding percentage was only 38 per cent as late as 1958; by 1967 it

had risen to 58 per cent.[13]

Since March 1968, Soviet naval ships began to make calls at ports in South Asia, the Arabian Sea, Persian Gulf, Red Sea and East Africa as the ships of other big powers from outside the region have been doing for a long time and continue to do even today. In the fall of 1968, two squadrons of the Soviet Navy cruised through the Indian Ocean, and during 1969, units of the Soviet Navy paid friendly visits to a number of ports in the Indian Ocean. Unlike the U.S. naval ships which have usually been greeted with hostile public demonstrations in the Afro-Asian countries, Soviet ships were given a rousing reception at many ports of call. Thus, when in May 1968, Soviet ships visited the Iraqi port of Umm Qasr in the Persian Gulf, they were greeted with a gun salute and with thanks for supporting the Arab cause.

In early January 1969, five Soviet naval ships visited Aden and two of them called at Colombo while conducting oceanographic exploration. In February 1969, a Soviet squadron comprising a missile-carrying cruiser, a destroyer, a commercial ship and a tanker, visited the Iranian port of Bander Abbas in the Persian Gulf. In March 1969, a Soviet flotilla consisting of three submarines, a tanker and a cargo ship was sighted off the southern coast of Ceylon.

A Soviet squadron comprising a missile-carrying cruiser, a rocket-launching destroyer and a tanker, paid a friendly visit to Port Louis, the capital of Mauritius, in April 1969. It was also reported to have paid a visit to the islands of St. Brandon, a dependency of Mauritius in October 1969. In December 1969, a Soviet submarine and a support vessel was sighted in the Malacca straits while proceeding to Singapore. In the last quarter of 1969, Soviet naval ships again visited the Persian Gulf and four of them made a

call at the port of Mogadishu in Somalia. Around the same time three Soviet vessels including a submarine paid a visit to Aden. From 27 to 31 December 1969, an anti-submarine ship and a landing ship paid a goodwill visit to Port Sudan at the request of the Sudanese Government. Soviet squadrons comprising two to three and sometimes four or five vessels, have paid goodwill visits to Madras, Colombo, Bombay, Karachi, Bander Abbas, Basra, Aden, Port Sudan, Mogadishu, Mombasa, and Port Louis, etc., since early 1968.[14] The number of Soviet warships passing through the Indian Ocean has varied from 12 to 25.[15]

Since its debut in the Indian Ocean in 1968, the Soviet Navy has made about 50 visits to 16 countries on the Ocean's perimeter. Soviet warships passed through the strait of Malacca and Singapore in January 1971 when the Commonwealth Conference was going on. The object of these Indian Ocean cruises of the ships of the Soviet Navy seems to be to gain experience of sailing in distant waters under different climatic conditions and training in escorting cargo ships—a legitimate function of all navys.

There has been no permanent deployment of her fleet in the Indian Ocean by the Soviet Union. All that has happened is that a few ships from the Vladivostok base in the north Pacific have from time to time passed through the Indian Ocean, escorting cargo ships or making goodwill visits to ports of friendly countries, or conducting oceanographic explorations. The great hue and cry about the Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean hardly makes sense. The Western powers, however, continue to assume that their navys, which were used exclusively to suppress and enslave the Afro-Asian peoples, alone have the right to patrol and conduct warlike exercises in seas thousands of miles away from their own coasts and any naval activity by

other countries must be denounced as a threat to peace and security.

Nor has the Soviet Union acquired any naval or air base in the Indian Ocean as Britain and America have in Gan Island, Diego Garcia, Asmara, Masira and Bahrain Islands, North West Cape and Cockburn Sound, not to mention the French bases. She has not entered into military pacts with any country of the Indian Ocean area, whereas Britain and the United States have military pacts with South Africa, Mauritius, Ethiopia, Malaysia and Australia. The Soviet Union has, on the other hand, only a treaty of friendship and cooperation with India which is far from a military pact and not aimed against any particular state or group of states. Both the signatories to this treaty have declared that they would welcome other states to conclude similar treaties with them. Reports in the Western press and SEATO papers about the Soviet Union having obtained bunkering and other facilities at Visakhapatnam and the Andaman and Nicobar islands have been categorically contradicted by Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi and other high government officials. This denial has to be believed because in India's open society no arrangement of this kind would have remained a secret.

Some time ago it was alleged by the Western press that the Soviets have converted the island of Socotra at the mouth of the Red Sea into an important naval station "where Russian warships frequently rendezvous and where the Russian seabees have begun refurbishing an old British-built air strip".[16] But this report was denied by the London *Times* correspondent after closely inspecting the island.[17] Reports about Soviet bases in the Indian Ocean are thus not to be taken seriously. One port or the other in the Indian Ocean is always mentioned in the press as

a recently acquired Soviet naval base. Pakistan's Gwadur port near Karachi was also named as a Soviet base,[18] and the London *Times* last year played up the completion in July of a strategic highway across Afghanistan linking the Soviet Union with the Indian Ocean via Pakistan. [19] Since then this road has been repeatedly mentioned as meant for sending supplies to the Soviet naval fleet in the Indian Ocean and arms for rebel movements. Similarly, great publicity has been given to the laying of a string of small buoys by the Soviet Union along the East African coast as navigational aids.

Much has been made of the repair and refuelling facilities offered by Singapore to the Soviet Union and the fishing agreement with Mauritius.[20] But Singapore has only made available to Soviet ships her huge naval dockyards on the same commercial basis as for other nations. Soviet interest in fishing in the Indian Ocean is not a cover for espionage as has been insinuated by some commentators.[21] A sizeable Soviet fishing fleet has been operating in the Indian Ocean since the 1950s, and by 1968 its annual catch was about 2 million tons, which is one-third of the total Soviet catch. The Indian Ocean has a vast reserve of fishes. It has been estimated that eventually the area may yield 10 to 20 million tons each year (the current world catch is about 50 million tons).[22]

Soviet activity and interest in the Indian Ocean is also due to the seaborne support of the various space events. Since 1967, Soviet Space Event Supporting Ships have been deployed continuously in the Indian Ocean which serves as an emergency sea recovery area for Soviet space ships. Yet another reason for the legitimate Soviet interest in the Indian Ocean, recognized also in a recent study by a research group of the U.S. Navy headed by Lt. Commander Beth

F. Coye, is the increasing use by the Soviet Union of the sea route through the Indian Ocean for movement of goods between the east and west coasts of the U.S.S.R.[23] The Trans-Siberian rail route, it is known, has reached its saturation point, and the northern route through the Arctic Ocean gets frozen in winter.

Whatever they might say for the consumption of the gullible, the Anglo-U.S. military experts well know that Soviet naval activities pose no threat either to their security or to the security of the Indian Ocean countries. An authoritative study by a retired commander of the U.S. Navy, published by the U.S. Naval Institute, has found the "current Soviet naval strategy an essentially deterrent and defensive one".[24] Describing as "erroneous" the assumption that "Soviet naval strategy had been and remained an offensive one", the noted U.S. naval expert calls it "one of dependence largely on missile-equipped submarines and shore-based aircraft supported by numerous and partially missile-armed light, fast, surface craft and coastal missile batteries." An unfavourable geography that compels the Soviet Union to maintain four separate fleets in the Black Sea, Baltic, Arctic, and Pacific has prevented the Soviet fleets from having direct and free access to the oceans of the world. This handicap does not permit "sustained naval operations on the major shipping routes".

Commander Herrick dismisses the notion about the Soviet "capability for transoceanic invasion of large continental areas" as "sheerest fantasy".[25] He writes:

> Present Soviet naval strategy, it must be concluded, does not support the popular view that the Soviet Union is bent on the build up of military forces essential to any aim of world domination by force.[26]

As to the prospects of the Soviet Navy developing into an instrument of offence, the above-mentioned American naval authority finds evidence in support of the view that "Soviet naval strategy will remain defensive for the foreseeable future".[27]

Another more recent American study has also reached a more or less similar conclusion about the Soviet Navy's role. According to it, "there is no real threat to the security of the United States" from the Russian moves in the Indian Ocean, though it points out other, mainly political and psychological, implications of the Russian naval presence especially for the uncommitted nations.[28] The growth of the Soviet submarine fleet cannot ensure command of the sea. The submarine power is not suitable for exercising control; it can only seize control from other powers and is hence no substitute for surface navy. The Soviet Navy, as already mentioned, has no aircraft carrier and is not equipped for use in long-range operations far from the country's coast. The absence of aircraft carriers in the Soviet Navy points to its predominantly coast-bound mentality.

The Australian professor, T. B. Millar, too does not rate the offensive potentiality of the Soviet Navy very highly. He writes, "The Soviet Union has built itself a modest capacity for long-range intervention, but would be quite capable for many years, of major operations far from home."[29] Soviet influence south and east of Suez has been called by Millar, "more shadow than substance".[30] The U.S. and Britain still remain the predominant naval powers at the key access points to the Indian Ocean through the South China Sea and around the Cape of Good Hope. Mere physical presence does not mean anything with the advent of nuclear-tipped long range missiles. Thus, Soviet naval activity in the Indian Ocean obviously has its

limitations. The Russians have no base along the littoral and they have no aircraft carriers from which to conduct reconnaissance missions.

At the Conference on the Indian Ocean area held this year under the auspices of Georgetown University's Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Professor Ole M. Smolansky of Leigh University, exploded the myth that the Soviet Union was "muscling in into the Indian Ocean". Smolansky asserts that the U.S.S.R. "does not now have (nor will it have in the foreseeable future) the capability to engage in extended military or naval activities in the Indian Ocean".[31] Another reputed western scholar, Commander McGwire, formerly of the Royal Navy and now a lecturer at the University of Aberystwyth, holds that the Soviet Navy, which was "operationally ill-prepared for such a move", was forced to act by Washington's initiative in supplementing the Polaris force deployed in the Mediterranean with units operating in the Arabian Sea "second only to the eastern Mediterranean in terms of target coverage" of the Soviet territory.[32] McGwire hazards the guess that further improvements in the sea-borne delivery system, that is, the change to the Poseidon type ICBM and their intended deployment in the early 1970's in the Indian Ocean, must have caused great concern to the Soviet Union. Professor Howard Wriggins of the Columbia University's Southern Asian Institute agrees with this view. He describes the Soviet initiative in the Indian Ocean as "strategically defensive",[33] and suggests "that this could be tested by the United States by proposing that the Indian Ocean be turned into a nuclear-free zone into which no such submarines would be sent."

Earlier, in a British-American panel study on the Persian Gulf, a West Asia expert of Columbia University, J. C.

Hurewitz, cautioned the Western alarmists not to take an exaggerated view of the Soviet moves in the Persian Gulf. He observed:

> Russian security planners might reasonably be expected to be watching closely the prospective political and military changes in the Persian Gulf, a body of waters that points directly to Russian missile and outer space industries in Central Asia. These are easily accessible targets for IRBMs, launched from the Gulf or even further South from the Arabian Sea or the Indian Ocean.[34]

The Mediterranean cruise of the Soviet Defence Minister, Marshal Grechko and Admiral Gorshkov has given rise to a new wave of alarmist propaganda in the American press about the offensive role of the Soviet Navy in West Asia and the Indian Ocean. Some U.S. naval experts have expressed panicky views regarding the inability of the Western powers to meet the Soviet challenge in West Asia in the near future. Apparently they have forgotten that the so-called spread of Russian influence in West Asia has been helped more by the West's support of Israel than by the activities of the Soviet Navy in the Mediterranean.

The outcry about the danger to the security of Asian nations from the growth of the Soviet naval power and the movements of Soviet warships on the high seas, has for its object a justification of the expansion of Anglo-American military presence in the area which the peoples of the littoral countries desire to keep as a peaceful ocean free from nuclear weapons and big power naval competition. With their network of communication and air and naval bases in the Indian Ocean and a sizeable permanent naval presence, the Western powers are not likely to heed the appeal

of the non-aligned nations at Lusaka last year to keep the Indian Ocean a nuclear-free zone. But the Soviet Union, on the contrary, has shown eagerness to respond positively to the desire of the Afro-Asian peoples to convert the Indian Ocean into an Ocean of peace, free from nuclear weapons. In his Report to the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Brezhnev put the promotion of the establishment of nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world as one of the basic concrete tasks of the struggle for peace and international security.

His recent proposal at an election meeting on 12 June 1970, for urgently taking up the matter of ending the naval competition between the Great Powers is undoubtedly going to meet the wholehearted support of the peoples of the Indian Ocean countries. Their fear of an increase in tension in the waters washing their coast, as a result of the movement of the navys of great powers far away from their native coasts, have found a ready response and echo in the statement of the Soviet leader. Brezhnev's proposal is quite significant inasmuch as for the first time a top leader of a super power has publicly proclaimed his country's readiness to withdraw its navy from the distant waters provided that other big powers do the same. In the Indo-Soviet joint statement of 29 September 1971 issued at the end of Mrs Gandhi's Moscow visit, the Soviet side expressed its willingness to act for the conversion of the Indian Ocean into a peace zone on a basis of equality with other big powers. The Soviet Union has once again displayed great initiative for ending a situation detrimental to peace. It is now for the West to respond to it in a constructive manner.

tracking stations to balloon launching stations, all of which conduct both civil and military research programmes.[37]

The United States has also established a defence space communication station at Woomera in South Australia. This station will monitor military satellites circling the earth. Despite denials by the Australian Minister of Defence, the construction of this communication station is strongly suspected to be connected with the closure of the U.S. electronic "spy nest" at Peshawar in July 1969.[38] The Australian Prime Minister, John Gorton, announced on 8 October 1969, that Australia would start preliminary work on the naval base at Cockburn Sound along the Indian Ocean coast of South West Australia. The United States will have service and refuelling facilities in this base. A Hongkong daily, *South China Morning Post*, called Cockburn Sound "an alternative base" to Singapore.[39] The Commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet said in Canberra on 21 July 1969, that the development of a naval base in West Australia would be very valuable for the Western world.

The United States is also believed to have an eye on the Cocos islands, an Australian territory in the eastern region of the Indian Ocean which offers the possibility of a base. Ideally situated only 500 miles from Sumatra and 800 from Singapore, these islands have a good airport. Australia occupies a key position in the new American naval strategy in the Indian Ocean. The United States desires to integrate the chain of bases in the Indian Ocean with bases in Australia. It was with this intention that the Deputy Secretary of Defence, David Packard, visited Australian defence establishments and naval bases in November 1971.[40]

The Americans have collaborated with the British in the Skynet Project which gives the military forces in NATO, West Asia, and East Asia a fast and accurate communica-

tion system. The British have access to the Simonstown base in South Africa. That this base is meant to be used by the NATO powers also, is clear from a statement made by the British Foreign Minister, Sir Alec Douglas Home, who said that the Simonstown Agreement would in effect become an informal extension of the NATO defences.[41] In fact, the United States has long been planning to link together the NATO and SEATO and join her 6th and 7th Fleet. It was with this object in mind that the U.S. Seventh fleet made a cruise of the Indian Ocean as early as 1963 when the Soviet naval activities had not even begun. A U.S. Admiral spoke of the U.S. troops, bases and ships present in the Mediterranean and Europe on the one hand and in the Western Pacific on the other, as "two jaws of the giant crocodile ready to shut".[42] The British military and naval cooperation with the United States in the Indian Ocean has been continuously growing since 1966 when by an agreement, Britain consented to make available to the United States the British Indian Ocean Territories for defence purposes.

The U.S.A. is also likely to set up an "Omega" radic navigation station on the Reunion Island in the Indian Ocean off Malagasy (Madagascar).[43] An agreement between the U.K. and the U.S.A. was reported is 1967 on the use of the island of Mahe, the principal island in the Seychelles group, north of Malagasy, for satellite tracking and telemetry facilities. A station has since been set up on the island.[44] Anglo-American cooperation can also be noticed in the Bahrein islands in the Persian Gulf. The Americans have a three vessel Middle East force (including two destroyers) permanently established at Bahrein under the command of a Rear Admiral, who is placed directly under the Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Fleet.

From the above description of the U.S. presence in the Indian Ocean, it is clear that the United States is seriously planning to use the Indian Ocean to her military advantage against the Soviet Union. The already cited group research study on the evaluation of the U.S. naval presence in the Indian Ocean, edited by Lt. Commander Beth F. Coye of the U.S. Navy, stated that the United States has "important political, economic, scientific and military interests in the Indian Ocean area".[46] The talk about American withdrawal from Asia has hardly any basis. H. Kahn, a knowledgeable American specialist in national security planning and foreign affairs has said, "I would also guess that we won't pull out all of our troops. There may be something like 50,000 U.S. servicemen in Vietnam for five to ten or more years."[64] Kahn wants the United States to stay in Asia "as a basic stabilizing force in the region".

American business goes ahead unaffected by the withdrawal talk "showing no discernible loss of confidence in the region".[47] It has stepped up its stake in the region and the present U.S. investment in Malaysia stands at $200 million.[48] New American investments have been made in the chemical, petroleum and rubber tyre industries. In Indonesia, too, the U.S. capital has become active. In 1970, U.S. investment in various projects of mining, forestry, fisheries, sugar plants, oil refining, general manufacturing, and ports and roads stood at $600 million.[49] The U.S. investment in the promising oil business of Indonesia is estimated at about $150 million annually. American exports to Indonesia in 1970 registered an increase of 31 per cent over the previous year, rising from $200 million to $263 million. Though the American investment in India is not very high, amounting to $300 million,[50] yet the United States remains the third biggest trading partner of Ceylon.

According to Michael T. Malloy, U.S. overseas investments, which have doubled since 1965, are increasing at a faster rate in Africa and Asia than in Western Europe. One of the reasons for the popularity of Afro-Asian countries in U.S. business circles is the availability of cheap labour there. The consumer electronics industry has "almost abandoned the United States in the past decades and almost all radios are imported and most of the black and white TV's".[51] The Ford and Chrysler automobile plants have also started moving to Asia. The U.S. investment in South Africa has risen from $467 million in 1964 to $692 million.[52] It forms one-fourth of the U.S. total for the whole of Africa and one per cent of the total U.S. world investment. U.S. trade with South Africa is also on the increase. U.S. exports to South Africa have gone up from $227 million in 1960 to $505 million in 1969, which is 39 per cent of the total U.S. export to Africa.[53]

But the American experts and foreign policy framers are busy working out the details of a new U.S. strategy in Asia whose outlines are already visible. President Nixon's Guam Doctrine gives emphasis to a new type of multilateral arrangement wherein naval strategy will have a prominent role. Thus, Rocco M Paone has suggested the creation of a "multilateral strike force".[54] He disfavours action through a unilateral force which, he fears, might be considered as "colonialistic" by the peoples of this region. According to Paone, control over the Afro-Asian Ocean region can be "dominant in shaping world politics". The importance of the region is highlighted by its large raw material reserves and its utility as a main artery of commerce and communication between the West and Far East. The region contains 90 per cent of the world's natural rubber, tin, jute and tea, and abounds in cobalt, tungsten, copper, manganese ore, silver,

salt, sulphur and coal. Besides being the rice bowl of the world, the region contains about 60 per cent of the world's oil reserves, 98 per cent of the world's supply of diamonds, 60 per cent of the uranium and 40 per cent of the gold.[55]

Similarly, the already mentioned research study edited by Lt. Commander Coye, suggests the creation of "a highly visible multilateral military presence primarily naval" as a long-term aim of American policy in the Indian Ocean. A plea for U.S.-Japanese "partnership toward solving the economic, political and security problems in the Indian Ocean" has also been made by this study.[56] It has recommended that the navy of South Africa should also be invited to participate in the proposed multilateral force. Among the other measures recommended by the above study, are retention of the basing facilities in Bahrein, modernization of the Middle East Force stationed there, and its gradual removal to a base in the British Ocean Territories.[57] A periodic transit of the U.S. Sixth and Seventh Fleet through the area on "a show of force operation" and holding of naval exercises are also mentioned in it.[58] All this has been surprisingly given the name of "a low military profile".

An interesting feature of the above study is the importance it attaches to the collection of intelligence data in the Indian Ocean, which is described as scarce, and for whose collection it calls for efforts on a multilateral basis. The American naval force stationed at Bahrein has been praised for its "highly valued contribution" to intelligence gathering, especially after the closure of the Peshawar base.[59]

The goals of American Indian Ocean policy have been defined as "maintenance of sufficient military forces, capabilities, base rights, and facilities to support U.S. foreign policy, strategy, and economic interests".[60] An

increase in "U.S. visibility in the area" has also been proposed by the U.S. naval experts. The United States has already started implementing these recommendations. A squadron of the U.S. Seventh Fleet paid a three day visit to Malaysia in June 1970. In April 1971, a United States naval flotilla of six warships, including an aircraft carrier, conducted a five-day naval exercise in the Indian Ocean. A Pentagon spokesman referred to the Indian Ocean as "an area of increasing interest to us" and said that U.S. warships would operate there "from time to time." [61] Thus raising the spectre of a Soviet naval presence, the Americans are penetrating the Indian Ocean which they plan to use effectively in their underwater nuclear-strike strategy against the Soviet Union. Their new concentration on far off islands and Australia is also intended for punitive action against the national liberation movement in various parts of Asia and Africa, and against such recalcitrant countries as might try to obstruct their designs to exploit the natural resources of this region.

While the Soviet Union has recently declared her willingness to withdraw her Navy from the distant oceans, including the Indian Ocean, on the condition that other big powers did likewise, there are as yet no indications that the United States and other Western powers are contemplating a pull-out. On the contrary they are busy building air and naval bases so called communication bases and staging posts, and switching over from the Polaris missiles to the far deadlier Poseidon. The prospects for the conversion of the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace are really bleak unless the Afro-Asian countries mobilize world opinion against this grave danger to their peace and security, and unitedly oppose the warlike Western designs in the waters touching their coasts.

NOTES

[1] J. Nehru, *Soviet Russia*, 1928, p. 191.

[2] R. J. Sontag and J. S. Beddie (ed.), *Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939-1941, Documents from the Archives of the German Foreign Office*, The Deptt. of State, 1948, p. 257. Professor T. B. Millar finds in the recent Soviet naval activities in the Indian Ocean "a pattern consistent with the secret protocol to the draft 1940 Four Power Pact". "The Indian and Pacific Oceans," *Adelphi Paper*, No. 57, London, May 1969.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 248-50.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 254.

[6] *Jane's Fighting Ships 1971-72*, p. 668. In nuclear powered submarines, the United States has still an edge over the USSR with 96 against the latter's 83.

[7] "Towards a National Security Strategy of Realistic Deterrence, *Strategic Digest*, I.D.S.A. Vol. 1, No. 5, May 1971, p. 21.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 36.

[9] *Jane's Fighting Ships 1970-71*, pp. 636-37.

[10] Curt Gasteyger, "World Politics on the Seven Seas," *Survival*, May 1970, p. 94.

[11] Philip Hanson, "The Soviet Merchant Marine," *Survival*, May 1970, pp. 169-172. The strength of the Soviet merchant marine was 13.7 million gross tons according to *Jane's Fighting Ships 1970-71* p. 567.

[12] *Ibid.*

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] "Soviet Naval Presence in the Indian Ocean," *Annual Review*, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi, April 1970, pp. 259-67.

[15] *Newsweek*, 18 January 1971, "Russia Drives East of Suez," p. 15. The U.K. Defence Under Secretary for Navy, told the House of Commons on 11 March 1971, that the maximum Soviet naval presence was six vessels—three surface warships, one submarine and two support ships in addition to a supporting merchant tanker, three hydrographic survey ships and six smaller vessels (*News Review on Countries Bordering India*, April 1971, I.D.S.A., New Delhi, p. 33).

[16] "Russia Drives East of Suez," *Newsweek*, 18 January 1971.

[17] Cited by Usha Mahajani, "The Big Bear in the Indian Ocean?" *National Herald*, 2 May 1971.

[18] Patwant Singh, *The Struggle for Power in Asia*, London, 1917,

p. 45.

[19] *The Times*, 15 September 1970.

[20] By the fishing agreement concluded between Mauritius and the Soviet Union in July 1970, the latter has undertaken to train over the next few years several hundred Mauritian fishermen to handle modern trawlers and help Mauritius establish a canning industry. The Soviet Union would also sell Mauritius some trawlers. Mauritius granted port facilities to Soviet fishing vessels, as also landing rights for commercial planes carrying the crew of Soviet fishing vessels. In his interview with Daniel McGeachie of the *Hongkong Standard*, the Mauritian Prime Minister, Ramgoolam, said: "We approached Britain, Norway and Sweden for help, but they were not interested. When the Russians made their offer, we accepted it in good faith. I do not think the military question comes into it." (*Hongkong Standard*, 26 July 1970).

[21] J. D. Sethi, "The Indian Ocean—Naval Strategies of Super Powers," *Statesman*, 25 March 1971. Sethi calls fishing facilities in-mid-Indian Ocean "not an economic proposition".

[22] *Naval War College Review*, October 1970, p. 39.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 40.

[24] Robert Waring Herrick, *Soviet Naval Strategy: Fifty Years of Theory and Practice*, U. S. Naval Institute, Annapolis, Maryland, 1968, p. 143, also p. XV.

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 145.

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 144.

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 147.

[28] *Naval War College Review, op. cit.*, p. 40.

[29] T. B. Millar, "Soviet Policies South and East of Suez," *Foreign Affairs*, October 1970, p. 80. A similar conclusion has been reached by a noted British authority on naval affairs, David Fairhall, who in his book *Russia Looks to the Sea* (London 1971), holds that basically the Soviet Navy is still largely a defensive weapon though its fleet is changing and it already has some offensive characteristics, (pp. 260-61).

[30] *Ibid.*

[31] Cited by M. V. Kamath, "Russian Ambitions in Indian Ocean, Experts Discount Fears," *The Times of India*, New Delhi, 6 April 1971.

[32] *Ibid.*

[33] *Ibid.*

[34] *The Gulf: Implications of British Withdrawal*, Washington D. C., 1969, p. 17.

[35] *Proceedings*, U.S. Naval Institute, May 1969, pp. 152-3.

[36] ULMS is a better and longer range follow up of the Polaris-Poseidon system based on submarine fired missiles carrying MIRV warheads and doubling the range (6,000 miles) of the existing

Poseidon missile. The estimated cost has been placed at $ 15 billion. A sum of $ 55 million has already been allocated in the budgets of 1970 and 1971 for design studies of these new submarines which would become operative in the late seventies (See R. P. Kissel, "ULMS—The Ultimate Deterrent," *Our Navy*, July 1971, pp. 2-3, 48.

[37] *Annual Review, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses* New Delhi, April 1, 1970, p. 256.

[38] According to *Jane's All the World's Aircraft* 1971-72, American spy photographs of Russian and Chinese missile tests are being relayed from space satellites to a secret U.S. base in Australia. While keeping silent regarding whether the Woomera base was being used to spy on Russia as revealed by the *Jane's All the World's Aircraft*, the Australian Defence Minister told the Parliament that "there is every reason we should cooperate with our great ally, the U.S." (*Australian*, 27 Oct. 1971).

[39] *Annual Review*, I.D.S.A., 1 April 1970, p. 256.

[40] *Australian*, 12 Nov. 1971.

[41] *Ibid.*

[42] Cited by Capt. T. Belashchenko, "American Presence in Indian Ocean," *Free Press Journal*, 16 February 1970.

[43] *Annual Review I.D.S.A., op. cit.*, p. 253

[44] *Ibid.*

[45] *Naval War College Review*, October 1970, p. 51.

[46] *U.S. News and World Report*, 8 February 1971, pp. 60-64. Similarly, Anthony Polsky in *Far Eastern Economic Review* of 3 July 1969, "The G. I. Shadow Lingers," wrote: "On the evidence at hand, it seems likely that the U.S. will continue a military presence in the region even post-Vietnam."

[47] *Far Eastern Economic Review Year Book 1970*, p. 9.

[48] *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 3 July 1971.

[49] *Far Eastern Economic Review Year Book 1970, p. 9.*

[50] *Ibid.*

[51] *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 28 August 1971 pp. 27-8.

[52] *Hearings before the Sub Committee on Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives*, 91st Congress, 1970, p. 175.

[53] *Ibid.*, p. 215.

[54] See Commander James A. Barder's article "The Nixon Doctrine and the Navy: Implications for a Sea-Based Strategy," *Naval War College Review*, June 1971, pp. 5-16.

[55] Rocco M. Paone, "The Soviet Threat in the Indian Ocean," *Military Review*, Vol. 12, Dec. 1970, pp. 54-5. According to T. B. Millar three possibilities of creating a multilateral force in the Indian Ocean currently under discussion in Western policy making circles are: (i) a NATO force including South African

naval units cruising in the Indian Ocean; (ii) regional maritime alliance of America, Britain, Portugal, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Argentina and Brazil covering the Indian Ocean and South Atlantic; and (iii) a southern area alliance of South Africa, Argentina, Australia and Brazil ("Indian Ocean alliances contemplated," *Armed Forces Journal*, 3 May 1971, p. 21).

[56] "An Evaluation of U.S. Naval Presence in the Indian Ocean," *Naval War College Review*, October 1970, pp. 43-6.

[57] *Ibid.*, pp. 47-8.

[58] *Ibid.*, p. 51. According to C.L. Sulzburger ("The Russians Are Coming," *International Herald Tribune*, 5 May 1971) the U.S. Secretary of Defence, Laird, has predicted that "as the Vietnam War winds down, more resources will become available for a stronger showing in the Indian Ocean". In his interview published in the *U.S. News and World Report* of 13 Sept. 1971, the U.S. Chief of Naval Operations, Elmo R. Zumwalt Jr., did not deny the likelihood of the Pacific Fleet moving into the Indian Ocean after the Vietnam war was over.

[59] *Ibid.*, p. 47.

[60] *Ibid.*, p. 46.

[61] *The Times of India*, 25 April 1971.

CHAPTER FOUR

JAPAN AND CHINA: POTENTIAL POWERS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

JAPAN

The post war period has seen Japan's rapid rise as the third power in the world in terms of GNP. It is estimated by specialists on Japanese development that Japan would probably surpass the United States in per capita income around 1990 and equal the latter in Gross National Product by about the year 2000.[1] The repercussions on world power politics of the emergence of Japan as an economically powerful state, have been a subject of much speculation and debate. As a noted American authority on Japan has written:

> It is probably as impossible to seek to become one of the top three economic powers of the world, much less number one, without eventually becoming entangled in international problems, as it is to become an olympic swimming champion without getting wet.[2]

Japan is believed to be on her way to becoming a nuclear power number six in the seventies.[3] Irrespective of whether or not she becomes a nuclear power, Japan is in any case destined to be a major naval power of the present

decade. She possesses the second largest merchant fleet and is quite advanced in the manufacture of nuclear powered ships. She has already launched her first nuclear-propelled commercial vessel and is about to launch another one.

Japan builds about half (by weight) of all new ships constructed annually.[4] The current five-year defence programme envisages building forty-eight ships for the Japanese Navy.[5] Although at present Japan is spending on her defence a relatively small part of her aggregate national production—0.8 per cent (the U.S.A. spends 9.2 per cent)—military expenditure has been rising year by year. Since 1952, when Japan assumed sovereign rights after the San Francisco Treaty coming into force, her military budget has gone up from 101.7 billion yens to 484 billion yens in 1969, an increase of about five times. Japan's level of defence expenditure is commensurate with her size of population (seventh in the world) and it is out of line only in terms of her enormous production.[6] But according to Kahn, even the present level of defence expenditure will make Japan a significant military power.

Japan's naval strength according to Jane's estimates is impressive enough. She has 10 diesel submarines, 27 destroyers, 13 frigates, 20 fast patrol vessels and 93 support ships. The naval air arm has 180 combat aircraft.[7] Japan planned to build 56 new warships, aggregating 48,000 tons under the third five year defence programme (1968-72).[8] The fourth defence plan (1972-76) envisages a staggeringly high military expenditure to the tune of \$ 18,000 million, an increase of more than double over the third plan (1967-71). It is proposed to double the navy during the fourth plan. By the end of 1976, Japan would boast 245,000 tons of naval vessels.[9] After his visit

to U.S.A. in the autumn of 1971, the Japanese Defence Minister, Nakasone, stated that the role of the Japanese "self-defence" forces should also include an ability to protect Japan's trade routes and overseas investments.[10] Nakasone's views are supported by a powerful group of industrialists who are regularly pressing for expansion of defence expenditure up to 3 per cent of the GNP, and for a tripling of the navy to guarantee the "security" of the Malacca straits.[11]

Japan has a vital interest in the Indian Ocean area as she depends on the Indian Ocean sea lanes for one-third of her overseas trade, and the Persian Gulf supplies 90 per cent of the oil required by her economy. Japanese monopoly capital is infiltrating into the countries of South East Asia. Its activities are particularly noticeable in Singapore and Malaysia. Japan is reported to be planning to buy five British shipyards in Singapore. The Sato Government has provided a large amount of aid for the military junta in Indonesia. The amount has been rising rapidly from $ 32 million in 1966 to $ 60 million in 1967 and $110 million in 1968. A total of 56 Japanese monopolistic enterprises have established themselves in Indonesia for a variety of business, including mining, manufacturing, transport, banking and trade. The Japanese Navy has already shown off its flag in the Indian Ocean. In early September 1969, a squadron of four Japanese destroyers visited Malaysia; the same year in October it visited 12 Pacific and Asian countries in the course of a training cruise and goodwill tour.[12]

The entry of the Japanese Navy into the Indian Ocean brings back to mind a lightning campaign by the Japanese Fascists, conquering the peninsula of Malaya, and controlling the Malacca straits in the wake of the destruction of the U.S. Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbour and the sinking of the

Prince of Wales and the *Repulse*, Singapore had surrendered after a short siege, and the security of the Indian Ocean, for 150 years a British lake, had vanished all too suddenly. The Andamans and Nicobars passed under Japanese control which sealed the fate of Burma, cutting her off from all sea communication with India. The Japanese Navy attacked the British fleet at the Trincomalee naval base in Ceylon and bombarded Colombo. It was only the timely appearance of the American fleet in the Coral Sea that forced the Japanese to withdraw their fleet from the Indian Ocean.

The Japanese naval power is once again trying to reach out to the Indian Ocean, and this time in collaboration with the United States which hopes to control this region in close partnership with Japan, and establish a multilateral naval force there with the cooperation of Australia and Britain. The United States is actively encouraging the leadership aspirations of Japan in the Far East and South East Asia. On 19 January 1960, when the new Security Treaty was signed with Japan in Washington, President Eisenhower had stated that it laid down the basis for Japan-U.S. relationship for a hundred years to come.

The military value of Japan has long been recognized in the United States and the latter is pursuing a policy calculated to use it. In 1949, the famous American scholar, Owen Lattimore, wrote that from the U.S. Administration's viewpoint, Japan was of great military value like Britain (as an immovable aircraft carrier), like Germany (as an arsenal), and also like Nepal (as a supplier of ferocious Gurkha mercenaries) — all combined together.[13] Even President Nixon, before his inauguration, had thus approvingly noted the future role of Japan in Asia and the need for American

support to it:

> Japan will surely want to play a greater role both diplomatically and militarily in maintaining the balance in Asia....The central pattern of the future in U.S.-Asian relations must be American support for Asian initiatives.[14].

Japan is being groomed by the United States for a leading role in the proposed Pacific Community which will include, besides South East Asian countries (Philippines, South Korea and Taiwan), Canada, Australia and New Zealand also. The Japanese Prime Minister, Sato, was the first to use the term "Pacific Asia" at the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the Asian countries in June 1969. Since then the term Non-Communist Pacific Asia (NOCPA) has been quite in vogue as a potential Japanese sphere of influence reminiscent of the old Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. It is interesting to find that such Indian Ocean states as Burma, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia are also being mentioned as part of the Pacific Asia which Japan desires to dominate with U.S. connivance. It is estimated that in the 1970s and early 80s, Japan would invest a great deal of money, something between $ 5 to 10 billion, in the so-called NOCPA.[15] Japan is expected to have 40 to 50 per cent of her foreign trade with this region by about 1980. Japan and the United States are planning to integrate the Japanese dominated Pacific Asia into a larger entity called the "Pacific Basin Community"[18] which, in 1967, claimed 22 per cent of world's population and 44 per cent of the world's GNP.

The close U.S.-Japanese collaboration in this direction is not expected to come to an end on account of a certain soreness in some quarters in Japan over President Nixon not taking Japan into confidence while opening a dialogue with

China and the current dollar-yen tussle and import restrictions on Japanese textiles. The textiles, it may not be forgotten, make up barely 10 per cent of Japanese exports to the U.S.A. In his interview with *Newsweek* (13 September 1971) Prime Minister Sato strongly denied the possibility of any change in relations between Washington and Tokyo due to these developments. Nixon, on his part, again stressed Japan's increasingly active role in helping "to shape the future of Asia and the entire world" while welcoming the Japanese Emperor Hirohito on 27 September.

Kahn believes Japan may prefer a relationship with Non-Communist Pacific Asia much like that of the United States to NATO, or like that of the United States to the Organization of American States.[17] In fact, it is feared in certain quarters that the Asian and Pacific Council (ASPAC) established in June 1966 as an organization designed to promote economic development and raise living standards in the Asian countries, was "only one step short of a military bloc". Just after its second session in the summer of 1967, it was decided that it should deal with political problems as well. Nixon, as Vice-President, openly urged that ASPAC should be turned into "an alliance actively dedicated to concerting whatever efforts might be necessary to maintain the security of the region."[18]

The United States is using regionalism to the detriment of the national interests of independent Asian countries. Regional cooperation under ECAFE could have been developed on a much larger scale were it not for opposition from the United States. In recent years the United States has been pushing forward its own plans for "economic integration" in Asia outside the Commission. The Japanese monopolists are only too eager to link the fate of their country with the United States and Canada in an Organization

of Pacific States which would also include some states bordering on the Indian Ocean.

Professor Kojina Kiyoshi of the Hitotsubashi University has suggested the concept of PAFTA — Pacific Free Trade Area — to embrace Canada, the U.S.A., Japan, Australia and New Zealand, with possibilities of associate status for South East Asian countries. A five nation conference of interested academic, official, and business leaders is organized every year by advocates of this line of thinking. The Asian allies of the United States are anxious to turn the ASPAC into a military bloc like NATO. At the Canberra session of the organization, several members openly supported the idea of lending the Council a military character, but the proposal was not adopted for fear of adverse reactions among the non-aligned nations.

Japan's image of India is not a favourable one, and despite the loudly proclaimed love for Japan in many political circles in India and their plea for an India-Japan-Australia axis to meet the needs of a fast changing situation in the Indian Ocean area, she thinks of India as a "somewhat hopeless swamp of poverty and inertia" and prefers to deal with the "more familiar ground of East and South East Asia",[19] which she dreams to integrate under her neo-colonial tutelage. India and other states in the Indian Ocean have reasons to be apprehensive of the emergence of Japan as a formidable military and naval power and her designs to slice off Burma, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia from the Indian Ocean for joining them as appendages to the Pacific Community under the joint U.S.-Japanese control.

CHINA

The Chinese interest in the Indian Ocean is rather old. It can be said to have started during the Southern Sung pe-

riod in the 12-13 century A.D., though the first record of the Chinese coming into the Indian Ocean may be traced back to the first century B.C., when the Han rulers sent an ambassador by sea to Kanchipuram, the capital of the Pallava kings of South India. As already noted, between 1405 and 1431 A.D. as many as seven Chinese naval expeditions came to the Indian Ocean to plant the Chinese flag. Of these the biggest was the first, which, commanded by Admiral Cheng-ho, comprised 63 vessels and about 28 thousand men. The Chinese attacked Java, Ceylon and Calicut. The later Chinese expeditions went even beyond India, to the Maldives islands, the port of Ormuz on the Persian Gulf, and Aden and several ports on the east coast of Africa. But the Chinese Navy did not maintain its presence in the Indian Ocean for a long time. In the middle of the 15th century it withdrew to the Pacific.

Mao has been quoted as saying in 1953 that "in order to oppose imperialist aggression, we must build a powerful navy". Although China has not so far emerged as a major naval power in the Indian Ocean due to her strained relations with both super powers, she may soon be in a position to devote more energy and resources for her naval development now that a process of detente with the United States is well on its way. "It is only a matter of time," writes an officer of the Indian Navy, "before China begins to concentrate on maritime expansion in the same way as she set out to dominate the Indians, Burmese and other South East Asians across her land frontiers."[20]

It is but logical that as an aspirant great power, China should eventually seek to emulate other dominant powers in naval development as she has already been doing in atomic weapons and missiles. Although it is still a long way when China can be seriously reckoned as a great naval

power, symbolic acts like manning of Albanian submarines in the Mediterranean by Chinese sailors, the appearance of Chinese ships near the Andamans in April 1970, and the reported Chinese move for missile tests in the Indian Ocean, cast the shadow of future developments.

The present strength of the Chinese Navy according to Jane's estimate (*Jane's Fighting Ships 1970-71*) stands at 1,000 ships and 140,000 personnel. Its strength of personnel has increased from 126,000 last year to 140,000. There has been an addition of 14 in the number of fast torpedo boats and missile boats over last year's total of 380. This increase in the strength of the Chinese Navy is thus only marginal. China's Navy at present consists of 33 diesel powered submarines, 4 destroyers, 8 destroyer escorts, 11 escorts, 24 submarine chasers, 394 fast torpedo and missile gunboats, 22 coast/river defence vessels, 27 mine sweepers, 70 amphibious type landing ships, 33 auxiliaries and 375 miscellaneous service craft.[21]

The Chinese submarines include one G-class, with missile tubes, built in China to Soviet designs. Recently, the *Washington Post* has reported U.S. intelligence cameras having spotted a nuclear powered submarine under construction in China.[22] At present almost all the Chinese submarines are diesel powered, old Soviet built models. Nuclear power enables submarines to remain at sea for months without refuelling. But the Chinese submarine fleet, though small and weak in comparison to the vast American and Soviet undersea armadas, is still the world's third largest.

The possibilities of China becoming a major naval power in the Indian Ocean are not quite realistic for the present. Most of her vessels are old Soviet models of the early 50s and the Chinese Navy is preponderantly defensive and coast-

bound in character. Yet in the light of reports of the Chinese taking up the construction of a nuclear-powered submarine and the approaching Sino-U.S. detente one need not remain indifferent towards the Chinese ambitions in the Indian Ocean. In a recent interview with Yugoslav journalist Dara Janekovic, Premier Chou En-lai declared that China would keep doing everything "for the sake of liberating" the Indian subcontinent and the Indian Ocean area from the control of the two super powers.[23] China can really create a nuisance there if she obtains base facilities in an Indian Ocean country.

In this context the rapidly growing friendly relations between China and Pakistan need to be watched closely. There have been unconfirmed reports of Pakistan extending facilities to the Chinese Navy in the ports of Chittagong and Khulna in the Bay of Bengal. Top Pakistani naval officials including the naval chief, Vice-Admiral Muzaffar Hasan, visited Peking in September 1970. They had talks with Chou En-lai and were received by Mao Tse-tung.[24] As a result of Yahya Khan's visit to Peking in November 1970, China gave Pakistan a loan of Rs 100 crores to finance her fourth five year plan which is to be repaid in kind in 20 years.[25] The Sino-Pak collusion can be a threat to Indian security in the Persian Gulf region also, where they can jointly mobilize the Shaikhdoms against India. Moreover, if the Chinese secured a foothold in an East Bengal port, they might exploit their position for smuggling arms to the insurgents through the Ganges, and also pose a grave threat to the outlaying Indian islands of Andaman and Nicobar. The opening of the Kashgar-Gilgit-Karachi road has a great significance for China as it gives her direct overland access to the Indian Ocean.[26] In extending all out support to the military regime in Pakistan against the Bangla

Desh independence struggle, China is motivated by considerations of power politics in the Indian Ocean region. In May 1971, China gave a $20 million interest free new loan to Islamabad and equipped 2 military divisions. An ordnance factory is being built with China's aid in East Bengal and she is also reported to have transferred 2 to 3 submarines to Pakistan. A number of gunboats have also been supplied by China to Pakistan for use against the Bangla Desh freedom fighters.

The Peking-Islamabad axis is a game deeper than what meets the naked eye. To the Pakistani leadership, obsessed with the fear of India, friendship with China has become sacrosanct. They have been aspiring to act as a bridge between Washington and Peking. The pseudo-leftist politician of Pakistan, Z. A. Bhutto, clearly hints at such a role for Pakistan in his book, *The Myth of Independence*: "India is afraid when she hears talks about bridges of understanding between China and the United States." He describes the Vietnam war as of decisive importance, and remarks: "If that war ends satisfactorily, it might lead to a reduction in tension between United States and China which would be to Pakistan's advantage."[27]

Similarly, the former President Ayub Khan explained in his book, *Friends Not Masters*, how the U.S.–Pakistan relations were "re-established on the basis of a new understanding", that is, normalization of Pakistan's relations with China. It is interesting to note that Ayub Khan envisioned the rise of Soviet-type communism in India in the wake of a period of chaos and gleefully hoped that it "would only estrange relations between India and China still further".[28]

China is also trying to develop relations with South Yemen and Tanzania. 258 Chinese experts arrived in Aden on 7

April 1971 to build a 420 kilometre road, in addition to 110 who arrived a month before. China gave two loans worth $23 million of South Yemen for road construction. She has delivered six gunboats to Tanzania and is building a naval base for the Tanzanian Navy in the harbour of Dar-es-Salaam, whose foundation stone was laid by President Nyerere on 6 May 1970.[29] Some 80 Tanzanian naval personnel have been trained in China to use the Chinese gunboats acquired by their country.[30] The Chinese are also constructing a 1,000 mile Tanzam railway connecting Tanzania with Zambia. 200 Chinese military instructors are believed to be stationed in Tanzania to impart training to the Tanzanian defence forces.[31] The *Hongkong Standard* of 19 April 1971, reported that 500 Zambians would be trained in railway engineering in China for a course of 3 to 4 years. The Tanzam railway project, costing China £169 million, will be completed by 1975.[32]

Peking is also trying to penetrate the Indian Ocean region through the various militant left revolutionary and insurgent movements currently going on in various parts of the continent. It is concentrating on Yemen and vociferously supporting the extremist Palestinian commandos and the Popular Front for the Liberation of the "Arab" Gulf. A sizeable population of Chinese emigrants in South East Asia and some islands in the Indian Ocean has also come in handy for the Chinese activities in the region. The 8,000 strong Burmese Communist insurgents (White Flag Communists), and the terrorists active on the Malay-Thai border and in East Malaysia on the Sarawak-Kalimantan border, not to speak of the Indian Naxalites—all have their chief patron in China.[33] The Chinese press and radio have for the past few years been inciting the people in these countries to organize armed resistance movements against

their governments. Chinese support for these movements is not meant to really help the cause of the revolution, for the Chinese have at times not hesitated in using them for pressurising some of the South East Asian countries to open trade and other relations with them as a solution to their insurgency problems. Although no positive evidence about China's direct hand in the recent armed movement in Ceylon has been discovered, its inspiration can be traced to Mao's thought with some justification. The leader of the Ceylonese movement, Wijiweera, was reportedly expelled from the Lumumba University for distributing Maoist literature. In fact, the movement started off with hand written Maoist slogans on walls with which we are familiar in India.

Besides Pakistan, on whom China mainly relies for her entry into the Indian Ocean, she is also developing her relations with several other countries in the Indian Ocean. She has become Ceylon's second largest partner in foreign trade next only to Britain. In 1969, China accounted for 12.8 per cent of Ceylon's total exports and 11.1 per cent of her total imports. (India's share was only 8.3 per cent of Ceylonese imports with no exports to balance it.)[34] On 21 January 1971, China concluded a protocol with Ceylon providing for a supply of 200,000 tons of Chinese rice for 41,000 tons of Ceylonese rubber. The Chinese gave a rebate of five shillings per ton over the price agreed for their rice, and 6¼ per cent premium on Ceylonese rubber over the Singapore market price. Enjoying such liberal concessions from China, Ceylon can hardly afford to displease her. For the past two decades Ceylon has come to depend on China as the chief source of her rice supplies. The Chinese are eager to forge closer economic ties with Ceylon. To elbow out an Indian textile firm which had proposed to set up a

textile mill in Ceylon, the Chinese came forward with an offer to establish one in the public sector. When the Ceylonese Foreign Trade Minister visited Peking last year in September, China offered an interest free loan of Rs 50 million.[35] She supplied Ceylon textiles worth Rs 14 million in exchange for coconut oil and crepe rubber. Earlier in August, she gave Ceylon 10,000 tons of rice on interest free credit on deferred payment to help the new Bandarnaike left coalition government tide over its foreign exchange difficulties.

China has also shown some eagerness to improve her relations with Burma which became strained after the anti-Chinese riots. A thaw has come with the exchange of ambassadors and the visit of General Ne Win to China. An Iraqi economic and trade delegation visited China in June this year and an agreement on economic cooperation and exchange was signed between the two countries. China gave Iraq a $39.2 million interest free loan for industrial construction, to be paid back in Iraqi products over a period of 10 years beginning with 1984. The Chinese are trying to cultivate such pro-Western states as Kenya and Ethiopia as well. They extended help for drought relief in Kenya, and Emperor Haile Selassie's visit to Peking in October 1971 resulted in the announcement of a $35 million loan to Ethiopia. In January 1971, China undertook to build a 2,000 kilometre road for Somali. By an agreement with Malaysia in May 1971, which followed the visit of a Malaysian trade mission to Peking, China agreed to buy the entire rubber stock with the Malaysian Rubber Fund Board. In addition she has undertaken to buy 150,000 tons of rubber annually at average world market prices.[36]

There are good reasons to think that the United States is not wary of reaching an understanding with Peking

over the demarcation of their respective spheres of influence and control in Asia. With Japan she already has an informal understanding about the former's role in Asia. It would not be long before some kind of accommodation is also made with China in Asia. According to Ambassador Young, the American Ambassador in Warsaw conveyed to Ambassador Wang that the United State expected China "to become some day a great world power". He assured the Chinese Ambassador that "it was no part of the policy of the United States to block the peaceful attainment of these objectives."[37]

Repeating Vice-President Humphrey's talk about "bridges of friendship", President Johnson said on 5 September 1966:

> ...we look to the day when those on the mainland of China are ready to meet us half-way....when they are ready to take their place peacefully as one of the major powers of Asia and the world.

Theodore H. White recalls in his book a conversation with Nixon in early 1968, soon after he became President. White relates:

> The very first thing he (Nixon) would do would be to try to get in touch with Red China. There had to be an understanding with Red China. In ten or fifteen years it would be impossible to run the world if Red China were not part of it.[38]

The process of reaching an understanding with China which began with the Ping-Pong round, found its climax in the Bangla Desh crisis. In the case of Japan, the Nixon-Sato

talks of November 1969 put the seal of U.S. approval on Japan's security interest in South Korea and Taiwan. It was this kind of thinking which dragged Japan first into Taiwan and Korea, then Manchuria and China, and finally the whole of Asia. Both China and Japan are well on their way to become major naval powers during the present decade and are bound to impinge seriously on the Indian Ocean too. Their appearance in the Indian Ocean in agreement or connivance with the United States would certainly add a new dimension to the problem of security in the region.

NOTES

[1] H. Kahn, *The Emerging Japanese Superstate: Challenge and Response*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1970, p. 130.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 125.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 13.
[4] T.B. Millar, "The Indian and Pacific Oceans: Some Strategic Considerations," 1970, p. 10.
[5] *Ibid.*
[6] H. Kahn, *op. cit.*, pp. 163-64.
[7] *Jane's Fighting Ships, 1970-71*, p. 193.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Derek Davies, "The Challenge of Japan," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 2 January 1971, pp. 18-20.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 20.
[11] *Ibid.*
[12] *Annual Review*, 1969-1970, I.D.S.A., New Delhi, April 1970, p. 267.
[13] Owen Lattimore, *The Situation in Asia*, Boston, 1949, p. 104.
[14] Richard M. Nixon, "Asia after Vietnam," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 46, No. 1, October 1967, pp. 120, 124.
[15] H. Kahn, *op. cit.*, p. 141.
[16] Nixon wrote in 1967: "History has its rhythms, and now the focus of both crisis and change is shifting. Without turning our backs on Europe, we have now to reach out westward to the East, and to fashion the sinews of a Pacific Community" (Richard M. Nixin, *op. cit.*, p. 124).
[17] *Ibid.*, p. 158.
[18] *U.S. News & World Report*, 23 October 1967, p. 88. Also

Foreign Affairs, op. cit., pp. 116-17.

[19] Dick Wilson, *Asia Awakes: A Continent in Transition*, London, 1970, p. 277.

[20] Captain A.P.S. Bindra, "The Indian Ocean as seen by an Indian," *Proceedings, U.S. Naval Institute*, May 1970, Vol. 96, No. 5, p. 202.

[21] *Jane's Fighting Ships 1970-71*, p. 61.

[22] *The Indian Express*, 7 June 1971.

[23] *The Hindustan Times*, 29 August 1971.

[24] *News Review on China*, I.D.S.A., New Delhi, September 1970, p. 26.

[25] *Ibid.*, November 1970, p. 19.

[26] This new Sino-Pak road link provides China an excellent trade outlet to Africa and the Middle East. More than 100 trucks are daily using this four-lane, all-weather highway and the port authorities at Karachi expect at least £ 150 million worth of Chinese exports to pass through the port.

[27] Z. A. Bhutto, *The Myth of Independence*, London, 1969, p. 185.

[28] Ayub Khan, *Friends Not Masters*, London, 1967, pp. 159-67.

[29] *News Review of Countries Bordering India*, I.D.S.A., New Delhi, July 1970, p. 34.

[30] *Ibid.*

[31] *Ibid.*

[32] 15,000 Chinese, including a handful of women specialists, are reported to be engaged on the construction of the Tanzam railway. A 500 kilometre stretch from Dar-es-Salaam running towards Zambia is expected to be ready by the end of 1971(*East African Standard*, 26 Oct. 1971).

[33] For details see S. K. Ghosh's article "Insuragency in South and South East Asia, 1969-70," in *The Institute For Defence Studies and Analyses Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 3, January 1971, pp. 407-55.

[34] J. P. Anand, "Sino-Ceylonese Relations," in the *Institute For Defence Studies and Analyses Journal*, January 1971, p. 344.

[35] *Ibid.*, pp. 348-50

[36] *News Review of Countries Bordering India*, I.D.S.A. June, 1971, pp. 26-7.

[37] Kenneth T. Young, *Negotiating with the Chinese Communists: The U.S. Experience 1953-67*, New York, 1968, p. 278.

[38] Theodore H. White, *The Making of the President*, London, 1969, p. 148.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE PERSIAN GULF: A NEW GAME

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Of late, the Persian Gulf has acquired a new importance in the wake of the British announcement of military withdrawal, the stepping up of American activities through Iran and Saudi Arabia, intensification of national liberation movements against the Shaikhly oligarchies and foreign oil interests, and the intrusion of China in the area.

Throughout the last century and a half, the Persian Gulf remained a British lake. The British, in order to promote their trade and political influence in the Gulf under the pretext of curbing the slave trade and piracy, had established their own, more sophisticated piracy, and created a sub-system of petty kingdoms in the area through their dominant trade and forced treaties of subservient alliances with the Gulf Shaikhdoms. With the march of the twentieth century, British oil interests in the Gulf increased and the British Navy, which switched over to oil from steam before World War I, was inextricably bound to the Persian Gulf oil. American oil companies found their way into the Gulf and with the French and the Dutch companies as minor partners, a pattern of economic exploitation was firmly established. This was facilitated by the backwardness, irresponsible behaviour, and igno-

rance of the rulers in and around the Gulf.

Then, with the advent of the Cold War, some of the important Gulf countries were made part of the Dullesian Northern Tier to encircle the Soviet Union. Iran under the present Shah, and Iraq under the arch Anglophile Nuri as-Said, became members of the Baghdad Pact. Saudi Arabia, under its primitive paternalistic King Saud, handed over Dharan as an American base. The exclusively American oil company, ARAMCO, became not only a finance provider but also a political mentor of this politically backward but oil rich kingdom. The petty Shaikhdoms of the Gulf, including Kuwait, with their profligate and ignorant Shaikhly families, were bound in gratitude for the easy money they began to receive in abundance from the exploiting oil cartel, and through it to the Western Powers.

But things began to change in this paradise of profligacy and super-profits with the 1958 revolution in Iraq. Earlier, Musaddiq's efforts in Iran had proved to be a false dawn; his regime was overthrown by the CIA, and the Shah had been restored. It had its parallel in Iraq in 1941, where America's role had been played by the British. Before the 1958 revolution in Iraq, several other important events had taken place in the Arab East, which diminished the British influence in the area. Among them were the withdrawal of the British forces from the strategic base of the Suez Canal under the pressure of the radical Government of Nasser which the British attempted to reverse through the tripartite aggression on Egypt in 1956. Their failure to knock Nasser out created that so-called vacuum that the U.S. tried to fill in through the Eisenhower Doctrine. Another blow to the British influence was the dismissal of Glubb Pasha from the Jordanian army in 1957.

However, the conservative regime in Iraq remained a

great prop for British and American influence in the Arab East and the Persian Gulf. Its fall was commented upon by an influential British paper in these words:

> Iraq . . . is the lynchpin on which the whole British position in the Persian Gulf depends . . . the events in Baghdad could be the gravest strategic and economic setback so far suffered by Great Britain in the Middle East.[1]

The revolution in Iraq, which had taken place against the British-sponsored monarchy, the Anglophile Nuri, and the regime-protected feudalism, came at a time when the tide of Arab nationalism was at its height. With the loss of Baghdad to the Baghdad Pact and with the loss of Nuri to the Western powers, the only leader that could come handy to the Western strategists in the Arab world was Saud of Saudi Arabia who attempted to establish an informal kings' alliance in the area. Despite some Arab revolutionary demonstrations in Bahrain, the Persian Gulf was yet quiescent. The Shah of Iran was still an enthusiast of the Baghdad Pact and Saud was ready to play the countervailing role against Nasser. Revolutionary Iraq began to have its influence felt in the Gulf. Britain bestowed so-called independence on Kuwait in 1961, and Quasim's claim to Kuwait brought the British armed forces to the head of the Gulf.

Southern Arabia also became vulnerable with the revolution in Yemen against the decadent theocratic Imamate. This brought Saudi Arabia on the brink of war with the UAR. The power struggle between Saud and Faisal which had started in 1958 became intensified, and Faisal virtually elbowed his brother out. The whole Gulf, from Iran through the Shaikhdoms and Saudi Arabia to Yemen, went agog

with gun-running. CENTO Powers, with Iran as the most active partner, came to the rescue of Faisal and the Imam of Yemen. Thus an informal alliance of CENTO-Saudi Arabia came to be established. Britain and Saudi Arabia conveniently forgot the Buraimi Oasis crisis of the mid-1950s and came closer to each other. Meanwhile in Oman, with the improved prospects of oil, the British strengthened themselves and crushed the internal revolt against the Sultan of Muscat, the British protege. Saudi Arabia stopped opposing Britain on this issue. With the launching of the liberation movement in Aden and South Arabia, the British and Faisal again grew nervous. For the British it was the beginning of a potential loss of a strategic base in the Arabian Sea, but for Faisal, the liberation movement against the British and the petty Shaikhs and Sultans was another onslaught against monarchy in the Arabian Peninsula. It was a potential danger to his own monarchic institution. This self-appointed doyen of Arab potentates of the peninsula, fearful of his own future, prodded by the West, and encouraged by the Shah on the other side of the Gulf, fought a two-front battle on Yemen and Aden, but ultimately failed.

The call which Faisal gave along with the Shah in December 1965 for an Islamic Summit, and for which he attempted to rope in other pro-Western regimes in the Arab world and Africa, was also a continuation of his conservative solidarity drive with the blessings of the U.S. This was opposed by the majority of the Arab Governments. The joint sponsorship of this call from the two conservative powers on both sides of the Persian Gulf is significant. This also came to nothing. With the intensification of the South Arabian liberation movement, the British had to announce in 1966 their withdrawal from their Aden base

by 1968. Seeing this base lost in the Arabian Sea, the British sought refuge in an almost closed sea, the Persian Gulf. Here the Sharjah and Bahrain bases were strengthened. The intensive liberation movement in Aden and the South Arabian Federation compelled the British to withdraw from there earlier than scheduled, in December 1967. The freedom fighters not only drove the British out of southern Arabia but abolished the British protected feudal relics of Amirates and Sultanates.

THE BRITISH ANNOUNCEMENT OF WITHDRAWAL AND REACTIONS TO IT

From the Persian Gulf too, the British had to announce their withdrawal. They declared on 16 January 1968, that they were going to withdraw their military presence from the Persian Gulf by the end of 1971. This was not a sudden shift in the British East of Suez policy, but rather a culmination of the trends and events of the last two decades. Prime Minister Harold Wilson observed in Parliament: "There is no military strength whether for Britain or for our alliances except on the basis of economic strength," and that Britain's security "lies fundamentally in Europe and must be based on North Atlantic Alliance". He emphasized that "defence must be related to the requirements of foreign policy but it must not be asked in the name of foreign policy to undertake commitments beyond its capacity." He declared that the Government had decided to accelerate the withdrawal of British forces from the Far East and the Persian Gulf by the end of 1971, and that apart from the remaining dependencies and certain other necessary exceptions, the UK would not be maintaining military bases outside Europe and the Mediterranean.[2] He said that his Government had in-

dicated to the Persian Gulf Governments that

> our basic interest in the prosperity and security of the area remains and. . . the capability we shall be maintaining here will be available for deployment, whenever in our judgement this is right, having regard to the force available.[3]

The U.S. was not happy with the British intention to withdraw.[4] However, the proposed withdrawal did not mean the withdrawal of the British political presence from the area. They could have intervened militarily either from Europe or from the nearby bases, Muscat and Oman, virtual British protectorates on the mouth of the Gulf. The latter had been exempted from the withdrawal plan. Thus, from Bahrain and Sharjah, the bases were to be shifted to Masirah, an island off the Oman coast in the Arabian Sea. The British were persuading the Shaikhdoms to form a federation and establish a collective security system under the guidance of British military advisers. It was the classical tactic of getting out from the front door and sneaking in from the back door. A subsidiary benefit would be the massive sale of British arms to the rich Shaikhdoms who would be terrified by exaggerated fears of impending disaster and made to start an arms race.

Another safeguard for the western interests was the increased activity on the part of the major conservative countries of the Gulf in the form of greater cooperation with the U.S. By overplaying their fears of a revolutionary Iraq in the north and the guerrilla activity in the South, and creating a false dread of the Soviet designs in the Gulf, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait can be made more subservient to the U.S. and bigger buyers of U.S. arms. These safeguards and alternative arrangements are going to more than offset the British mi-

litary withdrawal from the Persian Gulf.

The reactions of the Gulf States and others interested in the region, reflected these fears and hopes. Egypt and the Fertile Crescent countries saw through the British plans and their implications. A brief survey of the initial reactions which set the ball rolling would give an indication of the powers interested directly and indirectly in the region.

On the very day the British Premier made the announcement (16 January 1968), Cairo's *Voice of the Arabs* in its "Arabian Gulf" programme referred to the unrest shown by the U.S. over Britain's announcement, and alleged that the U.S. was drawing up plans to keep the region under its influence and control due to the American monopolies' sixty per cent share in the Gulf oil companies.[5] On 17 January, the UAR official spokesman, al-Zayyat, at a press conference welcomed the British withdrawal and liquidation of all military bases and rejected the power vacuum policy.[6]

Meanwhile on 19 January, Eugene Rostow, U.S. Under Secretary of State, in a statement said that the five Middle East States—Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia—were interested in taking responsibility for regional security and that they "would certainly be a nucleus around which such security arrangements could hopefully be built". He hoped that Iraq would join in the security efforts in the Gulf area.[7]

Iraq does not appear to have given any immediate reaction to the withdrawal announcement, though it is the only country in the Gulf with a republican government and radical policies. On 19 January, Baghdad's *al-Masa*, an evening paper, condemned all attempts to revive the "buried pacts" in order to include Iraq in them once again.[8] The same newspaper on 21 January, broadcast on Baghdad Radio the next day, accused the U.S. of establishing a new defence

alliance in the Gulf area for the purpose of "encircling" Iraq. It was commenting on Rostow's statement and said that "the Arab people were angered and were fully prepared to make any sacrifice. . . to liberate themselves from the new imperialist pact through which Washington wants to encircle and besiege Iraq".[9]

Iran is the foremost of the conservative countries of the Gulf. Tehran Radio on 16 January, referred to the British cut in defence expenditure, their decision to reduce military commitments in Asia, and their cancellation of a $1000 million order for 50 F-111 aircraft placed with the U.S. It predicted that British decisions would eventually upset the East-West balance of military power.[10] This preliminary reaction of concern gradually changed into confidence and even arrogance with the passage of time, as we shall see later.

Saudi Arabia is the next important country in the Gulf. At the time of the British announcement, the ruler of Bahrain was in Saudi Arabia on a state visit, and in the joint communique broadcast from Jedda on 17 January, surprisingly, no reference was made to the British announcement.[11] With Rostow's statement on 23 January on the Gulf alliance, and increasing criticism of Saudi Arabia as a supporter of the U.S. plan, the reticent Faisal broke his silence by saying that his government was not seeking "military alliance or political blocs but we do want to protect our interests and do whatever ensures our safety".[12]

Kuwait, being a super-affluent and small country, is very sensitive. The Kuwaiti Foreign Minister denied on 20 January, that Kuwait was engaged in plans to conclude an alliance in the Gulf area. He emphasized the Arab character of the Gulf.[13]

The small Shaikhdoms were unhappy with the British ann-

ouncement and apprehensive of the future. Some of them had already made an offer to the British Government to foot the bill for the British stay in the Gulf. They were afraid to openly express their fears, and perhaps it was of no avail also. However, the B.B.C. quoted Mohammad Mubarak, the Bahraini Director of Information, as declaring that the U.K. decision was "sudden and shocking" and that the withdrawal would create a vacuum in the area.[14]

Among the super powers, America's attitude and Rostow's proposals have been referred to above. The Soviet paper *Pravda*, published an article on 17 January on the British withdrawal and maintained that the British were forced to leave the area due to the Arab struggle. It predicted that the schemes to establish a new defence plan in the region sponsored jointly by the U.S. and U.K. would fail. It also charged Saudi Arabia for being active "with the sultans and feudalists in the area in the service of reaction and imperialism".[15]

LATER DEVELOPMENTS

The backwaters of the Arab world—the sleeping Persian Gulf—came alive with the British announcement. It was a jolt to the ancient Shaikhs, with their base of power on a complex of tribal rule, desert habits, oil bounty, and British protection, to wake up from a comfortable slumber of over a century. It was an invitation to the countries around the Gulf—Iran, Iraq, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia—to activates themselves to safeguard and enhance their power and prestige. It was, finally, an incentive for the U.S. to fill in the "vacuum" supposed to be left by the U.K., in the framework of the Indian Ocean.

The developments that followed the British announce-

ment can be conveniently divided under three heads: (*i*) the continuing efforts to form the Federation of the Shaikhdoms; (*ii*) the Bahrain Settlement, and (*iii*) the change over in the British Government and the backsliding of the policy of its predecessor.

The decision of the Labour Government to pull out from the Persian Gulf was such a shock for the Shaikhs that within one and a half months they held a meeting, and announced on 27 February, that a Federation of Arab Amirates would be established and that it would take effect from the coming 30 March.[16] At that moment of intense fear and hope, the Shaikhs conceived of that grand design, but could not fructify it till July 1971. The hectic activities of more than three years, the frequent visits of the Shaikhs to each other and bigger countries, the persuasion of the British Government and the cajoling by Saudi Arabia and Kuwait could not make the proposed federation a going concern. Despite the dire fear that these Shaikhdoms could not sustain themselves separately against the revolutionary process that might start there, they could not, for long, manage to come together. Their old tribal and historical rivalries and animosities and their present suspicions and ambitions could not allow the Federation to take off. Bahrain and Qatar, losing all hope of a federation, opted out of the proposed federation.

Another hurdle in the way of the Federation was the attitude of Iran. She had been opposing the formation of the Federation on the plea that Bahrain was an integral part of Iran on a flimsy historical basis. When the Shah realized that he could not acquire it as it was a predominantly Arab-populated archipelago with an Arab Shaikh, off the coast of Arabian Peninsula, and far from the Iranian coast, he had to give up the claim. Now the Shah, who is designing a for-

ward policy in the Gulf, has laid claim to three small islands on the mouth of the Gulf—Abu Musa and the two Tumbs which belong to the Shaikhdoms of the Trucial states. He has threatened that unless Iran's claim was accepted over these strategic islands, he would be opposing the formation of the Federation.

The question of Bahrain was a point of friction between Iran and the Arab countries. When the question was referred to the UN, the Secretary General appointed his Personal Representative to ascertain the wishes of the people of Bahrain, who went to Bahrain in March and April 1970 and submitted a report that the people of Bahrain desired an independent identity. The Security Council adopted a resolution to that effect and Iran accepted it in May.[17]

The Conservative Party was from the very beginning strongly opposed to the policy of withdrawal. When Wilson held the elections in June 1970, the Conservatives won the majority and formed the Government. In their election campaign too, they had promised their electorate that if they came to power they would postpone the withdrawal.[18] There started a series of visits to the Gulf by British officials and politicians, and meetings with the Gulf rulers at different places. This included an extended visit to the Gulf by Sir William Luce, Personal Representative of the British Foreign Secretary, and the meeting of the Foreign Secretary, Douglas Home, with the Shah of Iran in Brussels.

FEARS AND "VACUUM-FILLERS"

The Shaikhdoms, the relics of feudal tribalism inflated by the oil boom, are terrified by these socio-political changes. They are afraid of revolutionary thrusts attacking them from rear and front, from the south and the north. The revolu-

tionary process may take two forms. The Shaikhdoms being the most vulnerable, might fall first, and then the position of Saudi Arabia and Iran might become shaky. Conversely, a coup might take place in Saudi Arabia or Iran first, and then the Shaikhdoms might be blown away like autumn leaves. This will be good neither for the Western governments nor for the oil companies. Hence the Conservative strategic and neo-colonial interests coincide harmoniously. The federation, with the defence organization under British officers and arms, and with the Saudi-Kuwaiti solicitation for it, is a mechanism to make the prostrate Shaikhdoms stand on their feet.

Iran is behaving in a different way. Being a monarchy and a non-Arab country with greater manpower, natural resources, and military strength than all the other Gulf countries put together, it has assumed a role of destiny, and the Shahanshah, the man of destiny. Being a conservative monarch who has to preserve himself and his dynasty, his line of thinking and action runs parallel to Faisal and the Shaikhs, but that is not the only line he is contented with. He is a superior man, an *Aryamehr* (the sun of the Aryans) and the rebuilder of a race superior in culture and glorious in conquering traditions. He almost looks down upon the Arabs, including Kuwait and Saudi Arabia on the other side of the Gulf. This satisfies his Shahanshahic ego as well as serves his purpose. By glorifying his nation for its historic military exploits and cultural achievements, and by broadening the base of his rule by including a section of the middle class, and by sponsoring some minor reforms, more propagated than implemented, he is attempting to create an image of Ataturk inside and Napoleon outside. He is powerful enough to smash the radical Iraq, intimidate the Shaikhdoms and silence Saudi Arabia. He has learnt from Israel that

aggression and blackmail pay in the present international system, provided one serves the interests of a super power, America, and acquires sufficient strength in the region or subregion. This is to some extent indicated by his relations with Israel and the admiration expressed by Zionist writers for him.

THE FEDERATION OF ARAB AMIRATES

One of the "vacuum-fillers" of the Persian Gulf is the Federation of the Arab Amirates (F.A.A.) which has briefly been referred to earlier. It could not come into existence till very recently, despite several visits and meetings of the Gulf rulers, British pressurization, and the Saudi and Kuwaiti efforts. There is a greater probability that even though it has come into existence, it will not last long due to the complications arising from the disparities, rivalries, individual ambitions and suspicions among the Shaikhdoms. With the writhdrawal of Bahrain and Qatar from the proposed federation, only the Trucial Shaikhdoms are left out. They have the least developed political consciousness and institutions. Of the seven Trucial States, Abu Dhabi is so far the only oil-producing Shaikhdom and has an area about six and half times bigger than all the others put together. Abu Dhabi and Dubai, the latter a commercial centre, are the only rich Shaikhdoms with a population of more than 50,000 each. The rest are extremely small and poor ones. The Table on the following page gives the vital statistics and some other detail of the nine Amirates.

After efforts of more than three and a half years, it was announced on 18 July 1971, that the six Trucial States—Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajaman, Ummal Qaiwan and Fujairah —have agreed to establish a federation. The seventh state, Ras al-Khaima, at the mouth of the Gulf, declined to join

Amirate	The Ruler[1]	Area[2] (000 sq. m.)	Population[3]	Oil Revenues[4]	Oil Reserves[5]	Oil Production[6]
Bahrain	Sh. Isa bin Salman al Khalifa	0.2	182,203	25	0.4	70
Qatar	Sh. Ahmed bin Ali al Thani	4.0	70,000	102	3.7	324
Abu Dhabi	Sh. Zaid al Nahayan	26.0	46,375	116	15.0	384
Dubai	Sh. Rashid al-Maktum	1.5	58,971	—	—	—
Sharjah	Sh. Khalid al Qasimi	1.0	31,668	—	—	—
Ajaman	Sh. Rashid al Naimi	0.1	4,246	—	—	—
Ummal Qaiwan	Sh. Ahmad al Maalla	0.3	3,744	—	—	—
Ras al-Khaima	Sh. Saqral Qasimi	0.6	24,387	—	—	—
Fujairah	Sh. Mohammad al Sharqi	0.4	9,735	—	—	—
TOTAL		34.1	431,329	243	19.1	778

NOTE: The figures for population and oil are fast changing. Hence those given above are only suggestive.

[1] The names of the Rulers of Bahrain and Qatar are taken from *Middle East and North Africa 1969-70*, pp.569, 573, and the rest of the names are from *The Economist*, 6 June 1970.

[2] The area figures of the first two states are from *Middle East and North Africa 1969-70*, pp. 566, 572, and others are from Yusuf A. Sayigh, "Problems and Prospects of Development in the Arabian Peninsula," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, vol.2, No. 1, January 1971, p. 42. The area and population figures of the Trucial States given here also tally with those given in Donald Hawley, *The Trucial States* (London, 1970), p. 277. The total area of the seven Trucial States has been given as about 32,000 square miles in *Middle East and North Africa 1969-70*, p.575.

[3] The population figures of the first two countries are from *Middle East and North Africa 1969-70*, pp. 566, 572, and the rest are from *The Economist*, cited above.

[4],[5],[6] The figures, all pertaining to the 1967 oil revenue in million dollars, oil reserves in billion barrels, and oil production in thousand barrels a day, are from Sayigh, cited above.

it. The federation would be known as the United States of Arab Amirates. It will have three organs of government, the Supreme Council, the Cabinet, and the Consultative Assembly. Shaikh Zaid of Abu Dhabi is expected to be the President of the Supreme Council. The two richest Amirates, Abu Dhabi and Dubai, have a veto power in the Supreme Council. Ras al-Khaima, with an area of about 600 square miles and a population of 25,000, declined to join because its demand for equal privileges was not accepted.[19] However, the refusal of Ras al-Khaima, on whose strategic Tumb islands Iran has laid claim, must have emerged from reasons deeper than the demand for equal privileges.

Bahrain and Qatar, non-Trucial Shaikhdoms which were included in the original proposal for the federation, opted out later and declared their independence. Bahrain became independent on 15 August 1971, and on 18 August the Security Council recommended her membership of the United Nations. Through a treaty of friendship which includes a clause providing for "consultations in times of need",[20] Britain has succeeded in preserving her influence over Bahrain. Qatar also declared independence on 13 September 1971. On 15 September it became the 130th member of the U.N. Qatar too has signed a treaty of friendship with Britain.[21]

SHAHANSHAH'S CHAUVINISM

As has been mentioned earlier, excepting Iraq, all the other Governments are monarchies at various stages of development from rules as that of the primitive Shaikh of Ajman, for example, through the paternalistic kingship of Saudi Arabia, to the bureaucratic monarchy of Iran. But no monarchy is a really constitutional and democratic one, though Iran and Kuwait have parliaments. In these monar-

chies the preservation of ruling dynasties is the supreme national policy; all other policies and plans are subservient to this. Hence the national interests are interpreted in a way as to serve the interests of the dynasties and their internal and external allies. Iran serves as the ideal example of this category of states.

The present Shah is the son of Raza Khan, an officer of the Cossack army in Iran, who having brought about a coup against the Qajar dynasty of Iran, himself became a king, Raza Shah. He was a ruthless king, hobnobbing with the Nazis when the Allies occupied Iran in World War II. They deposed him and installed his son, the present Mohammad Raza Shah. The present Shah came under the patronage of the U.S. under the Truman Doctrine, and after having had a bitter experience with popular forces under Premier Musaddiq, completely aligned himself with the West through the Baghdad Pact and other measures. The fall of monarchy in the neighbouring country, Iraq, must have taught him that military alliances alone will not sustain him, until the internal rot was cleared. Hence his agrarian and other reforms of the so-called White Revolution. One of the purposes of these reforms was to strike at the centres of power competing and challenging his power—the feudal lords and the religious leaders. This he did, to some extent, by smashing a few and aligning with others. He attempted to change his country from a feudal monarchy to a bureaucratic one and is now dependent mostly on the corrupt bureaucracy, civil and military. The peasants, who form 70 per cent of the population, the growing number of workers, and the lower middle class despite the over-publicized reforms, are still a miserable lot. But in the absence of trade unions and an organized peasant movement, they are not yet a force.

By winning over the bulk of the middle class and establishing a strong security police which is both infiltrated and supervised by the CIA, the Shah has bought his survival. To strengthen this "operation survival", a big propaganda machinery has been erected which attempts to create and maintain an image of the Shah as a benevolent and enlightened ruler. To strengthen further this image of himself and to raise an emotional patriotic upsurge among the masses in order to divert their attention from their stark poverty and inhuman deprivations, the Shah has embarked on a chauvinistic foreign policy in the Persian Gulf. By magnifying the glorious Iranian culture, emphasizing the racial superiority of the Aryan race, calling himself the Aryamehr (the sun of the Aryans) and invoking the manifest destiny of Iran in the Gulf, the Shah is strengthening his chances of survival. Apart from the excitable and credulous masses, the military can also be kept glued to the developments of the Gulf, so that its attention is not diverted to the misery of the masses prompting them to organize a revolution.

Iran is the biggest country in the Gulf from the viewpoint of manpower, wealth, and military strength. The *New York Times* reported recently that Iran's military power on land, air and sea was being built up under a billion dollar programme quietly underwritten by the U.S. and Britain. The reason given is to prepare for British withdrawal from the Gulf. Iran already possesses what American official term a "credible deterrent" in the air and the sea in the Gulf. With the addition of new squadrons of the latest phantom jet fighter-bombers, Iran would be a major West Asian power by 1975.[22] High posture, blackmail and expansion, the Shah believes, will pay and cannot be stopped or retaliated in view of the weakness of the divided Arab front.

Apart from dominating the Gulf through her navy and air force and blackmailing the petty Shaikhdoms for Iranian and Western interests, Iran, along with Saudi Arabia, will also attempt to freeze the socio-political structures of the Shaikhdoms, and under the pretext of scuttling revolution, would help the Shaikhs in introducing a reign of repression in their ancient Shaikhdoms. By commanding the mouth of the Gulf for which she is laying claim to the strategic islands of Abu Musa and Tumbs,[23] Iran can obstruct Iraqi navigation and blackmail her, as well as arrogate to herself the function of stopping revolution from coming into the Gulf from the south.

FAISAL'S PATRONAGE

Faisal of Saudi Arabia is now the elder brother in the Saudi clan and perhaps the shrewder and more powerful one. The Shaikhs of the Gulf also look to him as their benign elder brother. The problem area of the Gulf is not Iran, which is non-Arab and which can influence the Arab western coast only through money and armed strength. On the other hand, Saudi Arabia, being the giant among the pigmies,[24] and bordering the Persian Gulf Shaikhdoms from north to south, rich in mineral resources apart from oil, and prestigious in terms of history and religion, has a tremendous potential influence on the small Gulf states which are all Arab and originating from the desert of Arabia. This is a great asset for Saudi Arabia, provided the clan after Faisal remains united. The immediate problem of the Gulf from the conservative point of view is the establishment of the Federation of Arab Amirates. It was believed that if these feudal Shaikhs do not hang together, they would be hanged one by one by the revolutionaries, as has happened in South Arabia in 1967. If once the Shaikhdoms fall, Kuwait may also fall.

Saudi Arabian solidarity will begin to melt when on all sides the flames of revolution are burning. Hence the first line of defence for Saudi Arabia, as well as Kuwait and Iran, is the establishment and maintenance of the Federation. In this context the solicitude of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait is understandable. For the last few months the increased joint efforts of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in persuading the Shaikhs to form the Federation[25] have now materialized.

KUWAIT'S LARGESSE

Kuwait occupies a special place in the Persian Gulf Shaikhdoms because of its strategic position at the head of the Gulf, and its early discovery and abundance of oil. It has also been famous for its riches, welfare programme, and its largesse for the Arab countries and now for the poor Shaikhdoms. It was the first Shaikhdom to gain independence in the Persian Gulf. Nominally under the Ottoman Empire and part of the Basra Vilayet, the wily Shaikh had contracted a secret treaty in 1899 with the British. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in World War I, Kuwait remained under British protection. In 1961 the treaty with the British was terminated and Kuwait became independent. Iraq, under Qasim, immediately laid claim to it and a crisis developed which was settled with the new Government of Iraq after the overthrow of Qasim. That crisis prompted two developments in Kuwait, the establishment of the Kuwait Fund for Arab development and the beginning of a semi-constitutional government.

Kuwait, with more than half a million population, with a fabulous oil revenue, and comprising about 53 per cent of expatriates, is a super-affluent country. She has the highest per capita income in the world, now challenged only by Abu Dhabi, which is also rich in oil reserves, having 19.5 per

cent of the entire world's proven reserves. Kuwait's role in Arab affairs owing to its position, monarchy, size, and riches, has been cautious, neutral, and conciliatory. She has sometimes been the target of radical Arab attacks, but since the 1967 war her position has improved.

In the Persian Gulf, Kuwait had been playing, along with Saudi Arabia, an active role in bringing about the Federation of the Arab Amirates. Among the Gulf Shaikhdoms, Kuwait is the richest and most prestigious one, and thinks herself superior to the other Shaikhdoms now becoming independent, but too small a state to compete with Saudi Arabia or Iraq. Hence it is contented to play second fiddle to Saudi Arabia, casting furtive glances on Iraq and other radical Arab states outside the Gulf. Though the cabinet is dominated by the royal family, Kuwait has a Parliament. Thus both in the Parliament and the press, a muffled criticism is sometimes heard. The opposition leader in the Parliament, Ahmed at Khatib, on 10 May 1971, made serious charges against the genesis and aims of the proposed Federation of Arab Amirates. He claimed that preliminary studies for this Federation were prepared in Tel Aviv.

In early 1967, an American official, Rostow, and a British official, Battle, met in Tel Aviv along with a number of American, British, Israeli and Iranian intelligence officers, and prepared a draft.[26] Khatib is the leader of the Kuwait branch of the Arab Nationalist Movement established by George Habash who is also the leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). Kuwait has a large number of Palestinians manning Government jobs and their radicalism is a great force in the Gulf. The Kuwaiti Government, headed and controlled by the Sabah family, is jealously neutral in Arab affairs and conservative

in the Persian Gulf, and along with Saudi Arabia, had been active in persuading the Shaikhs to establish the Federation.

IRAQI ISOLATION

Iraq is dreaded as an exporter of revolution from the north and a patron of the revolutionaries in the south. But Iraq has her own problems. While it is a window on the Gulf to the radical and advanced north, it is also a suffocated country. It has no coast except a few miles along the Gulf between Fao and Umm Qasr, a new port near the border of Kuwait. The Shattal Arab is under dispute when Iran recently unilaterally repudiated the 1937 treaty. Iran had been instigating and aiding the Kurdish insurgency in Iraq, but recently an agreement was concluded between the Government of Iraq and the Kurds. Iraq is also thick in inter-Arab politics, being an important country of the Fertile Crescent. The present Right Baathist regime, which came to power in July 1968, is not only opposed to the Left Baathist regime of Syria but also to Egypt. A large contingent of the Iraqi army is stationed in Jordan since the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

With its involvement in Arab politics, and with little influence in the Gulf Shaikhdoms, Iraq feels left high and dry. Iranian chauvinism in the Gulf and the blackmail on the Shattal-Arab keeps Iraq on edge. Iran, while opposing the Federation under one or the other pretext, is still friendly with Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, both monarchies. For Iraq, while the Arab kings and Shaikhs are cold, the main enemy is Iran—mightier in wealth, manpower, armed strength, ambitious, and with American support. The recent claim of the Shah on Abu Musa and other islands on the mouth of the Gulf, is dreaded more by Iraq than any

other Gulf country, because it can become another weapon of blackmail in the hands of Iran. Another problem for Iraq is her chronic instability and lack of consensus. It seems that apart from sending delegations to the Shaikhdoms,[27] issuing statements,[28] and conducting propaganda on the radio, there is little that Iraq can do.

ARMS RACE AND WESTERN MUNITION MAKERS

One of the results of the British announcement of withdrawal in 1971 has been the arms race in the Gulf. The theory of military vacuum, assiduously propagated by the Western powers, and the magnification of the increasing Soviet influence in the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf, has not only come handy to the Anglo-American establishment of bases in the Indian Ocean but also to the induction of Western arms into the Persian Gulf. The main beneficiaries of this propagandistic theory are the U.K. and the U.S. munition makers. The Gulf countries rich in oil revenue, poor in public opinion and democratic checks, and alarmed by probable revolutionary activities, are easy victims of the armament manufacturers of the Western countries. Iran's expansionism and superiority posture, tacitly approved and encouraged by the U.S., has become another contributory factor in enhancing the fears of Arab kings and Shaikhs on the other side of the Gulf. While Iran and Saudi Arabia were sponsored as the local sentinels by the U.S. against any "subversion", Iran, with its Phantom jets, growing navy, and forward policy, is also encouraged as a desperado to terrorize the Arab Shaikhs into conformity if any of them tend to yield to the local pressure. For the tribal-minded Shaikhs, who hardly make a distinction between the state budget and their private purses, the increasing oil income is the standing temptation to satisfy their

Military balance in 1970-71[1]

Country	*Population in Millions*	*Total Armed Forces*	*GNP 1969 $ millions*	*Defence Budget 1970-71 $ millions*	*Army Total Strength*	*Navy Total Personnel*	*Air Force Total Personnel and Combat Aircraft*	*Other Particulars*
Iran	28.4	161,000	8,900	779	135,000	9,000 one destroyer	17,000 Combat aircraft 175 with 32 Phantoms and 90 F-5.	Sophisticated missiles in every wing of armed forces
Iraq	9.0	94,000	2,800	424	85,000	2,000 only patrol boats	7,500 Combat aircraft mostly obsolescent	
Saudi Arabia	7.3	36,000	3,900	387	30,000	1,000 only patrol boats	5,000 Combat aircraft-75	

[1] Derived from *Aerospace International,* November/December 1970, Vol.6, No. 6, pp. 40-45, and R. Beasley, "The Vacuum That Might Be Filled—The Gulf and Iran's Military Potential Assessed," *The New Middle East,* No. 32, May 1971, pp. 38-40.

personal vanity and provide a status symbol for themselves.

A glance at the military balance (on the preceding page) of the three important states of the Persian Gulf will establish the expansionist ambitions of Iran, and a look at the Shaikhdoms' shopping list for hardware will indicate the current and future arms race in the Gulf.

These statistics show that Iran is from every point of view not only superior, but also more powerful than all the other Persian Gulf countries put together, including the 10 Amirates whose strength at present is negligible.

Kuwait had been developing its armed forces since early 1960s, but since the last three years the other Amirates, especially Abu Dhabi and Qatar, are engaged in a reckless expenditure on arms.[29] Apart from what they have acquired lately and what has been ordered, it is believed that these Shaikhs want each a squadron of "lightning" supersonic interceptor-fighters.[30] Beasley is thoroughly satisfied that "Iran will be quite capable of handling any emergency that may occur locally".[31]

BRITISH PRESENCE IN OMAN AND THE LIBERATION MOVEMENT

Oman and Muscat became the first British protectorate in the region and is now the last bastion of British influence. As far back as 1798, under the shadow of the French advance during the Napoleonic Wars, the British coerced the coastal tribes of Oman to sign a series of treaties which gave Britain exclusive rights to control their foreign affairs and defence. On a number of occasions the Oman tribes rose against British rule. Their first uprising took place in 1895. More recently, in 1956, a powerful mass uprising flared up and the situation took such a serious turn that at the beginning of 1957 the British had to bring in reinforcements from Cyprus, Kenya and Singapore. In October 1960, ten Arab

states pressed for the inclusion of the question of Oman in the agenda of the General Assembly of the U.N. The question was repeatedly debated in the U.N. up to the 24th session of the Assembly. The General Assembly passed resolutions urging Britain to recognize the independence of Oman and withdraw her forces.

In the mid 1960s the centre of the liberation movement moved to Dhofar, where the revolutionaries liberated a number of towns. The Dhofar Liberation Front extended its activities to the Persian Gulf and the Organization took the name of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Occupied Arab Gulf (PFLOAG). Alarmed at the success of the liberation movement, the British replaced the highly reactionary Sultan of Muscat and Oman through a palace coup in July 1970, but they could not stem the tide of the liberation movement. The movement is under the strong influence of the Marxist government of southern Yemen which came to power in late 1967 after the British withdrawal from Aden and Southern Arabia.

The situation in the region remains explosive and the continued British presence in Oman makes a mockery of the much trumpeted British withdrawal from the Gulf. In the words of a leading Soviet scholar, G. L. Bondarevsky:

> What is taking place in the south-eastern corner of the Arabian Peninsula has a direct connection with the British policy in the Western part of the Indian Ocean, and will no doubt exert a considerable influence on the course of events in the Persian Gulf itself.[32]

The British could not succeed in destroying the national liberation movement in Dhofar even with the new Sultan Qabus on the throne. Half of the budget is being spent on

military operations against the liberation movement, and the Oman armed forces have 96 British army officers and 46 Air Force officers commanding them. They have a large number of white mercenaries in their ranks who have experience of fighting colonial wars in Malaysia, Katanga, Kenya and Yemen.[33]

The British announcement of withdrawal from the Persian Gulf is in fact actuated by their desire to salvage their influence in the region. Scared of the rising tide of revolutionary movement, they have cleverly chosen to retreat to Masira, an island off Oman. Quite candidly, a British writer, David Holden, has admitted the above motivation of the British move. He writes:

> Under the circumstances any effort by Britain to retain permanent forces in the area after 1971 would have been interpreted as a return to imperialism...Meanwhile we must recognize that the best policy *now* may be to stand back as far as possible from the Gulf and let its constituent peoples find their own levels.[34]

Earlier, the Foreign Office adviser, William Luce, had underscored the need to find a new basis for the British domination of the Persian Gulf. In an article, he called it "unrealistic" to imagine "that the *pax Britannica* can be maintained for a further period of years after 1971 on the old basis."[35]

SUPREME PATRON—THE U.S.

There seems to have been established a sort of hierarchy of control and patronage in the Gulf. The small Shaikhdoms are patronized by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia which in turn

are supported by Iran, which ultimately is dependent on the U.S.

Now among the western countries, Great Britain is no longer capable of playing the role it had played for two centuries. French oil interests in the Gulf and other economic interests in Arab countries are only secondary, hence their subsidiary role in providing arms to these countries. The main burden falls on the U.S., who due to her interests and ambitions, is prepared to shoulder it. Hence we find the U.S. as the supreme patron of Iran and Saudi Arabia, who have arrogated to themselves the roles of local mentors and guardians, despite the differences in their approach and ultimate objectives. An American writer has advocated the strengthening of the bipolar sub-system, (the poles being Iran and Saudi Arabia) which he is confident has already come into existence shielding the area from Baghdad, Cairo and Moscow, by confirming Iran as the pre-eminent naval power in the Persian Gulf, and Saudi Arabia as the pre-eminent military power in the Arabian Peninsula.[36] Saudi Arabia, despite its acceptability in the Arab Shaikhdoms, is too undeveloped internally and too involved in Arab and Islamic politics to be able to play an efficient role in the Gulf. Iran feels capable of assuming the role in the Gulf which, the Shah thinks, is searching for an actor. Hence we see the close liaison and understanding between Iran and the U.S.

American oil magnates are also reported to be trying to acquire a foothold in Oman. In early 1971, an American multi-millionaire, Wendell Phillips, succeeded in obtaining a 10 millon acre off-shore oil concession from Sultan Qabus which was later mysteriously cancelled.[37] It is also reported that a U.S. company would maintain its aircraft at Sharjah which has been abandoned by the Royal Air Force. (Abu

Dhabi has purchased all the planes from the RAF base at Sharjah).[38] The American Ambassador to Kuwait, John Walsh, met the Defence Minister of Kuwait, Shaikh Saad Abdullah al Sabah, and the local press reported that the American drive could lead to bilateral agreements between the United States and some Gulf states and probably with the Gulf States Federation.[39]

Rostow's proposal for the western-oriented security plan immediately after the British announcement in February 1968 has been dealt with earlier. Shah's inclination towards it,[40] and Faisal's cold-shouldering in the teeth of strong opposition from other Arab countries, made the former disconcerted and he abruptly postponed his planned visit to Saudi Arabia. Rostow's proposal was a still-born baby; it could not be revived.

But the developments that followed unfold a pattern envisaged by the Rostow proposal. We may simply catalogue them and they will tell their own story. On 25 December 1967, the Iranian Parliament ratified a bill authorizing $260 million to strengthen the armed forces, especially in the Persian Gulf.[41] Premier Hoveida's budget of 1968/69 was a record one of $3.6 billion, which included plans to buy advanced arms.[42] The Shah started pressing the U.S. Administration to provide Iran with $600 million worth of U.S. arms over six years.[43] After a month when he visited Washington, he sought the U.S. commitment on his demand[44] and got a U.S. pledge of support for defence forces.[45] Meanwhile, the Iranian Government announced that it "would not tolerate" the new Amirate Federation, saying that it was "British inspired" and that Iran reserved all its rights in the Persian Gulf and would not, in any shape or form, tolerate "historic inequity and injustices".[46] Iran announced that its Air Force began using two squadrons of

American-made F-4 Phantom jets.[47] The Shah again visited the United States in October 1969 to seek arms. The *New York Times* said that it was not known whether the Shah and the President had reached any final accord on the Shah's repeated desire to buy $100 million worth of U.S. jets annually with proceeds from added oil sales to the U.S. which the Shah also sought to arrange.[48] Earlier, Iran had been demanding of oil companies to increase the Government revenues[49] by 17 per cent. The London *Financial Times* reported the Shah's statement that he had personally committed himself to accept nothing less than the $1,000 million the government was demanding from the Consortium.[50] The recent OPEC agreement in Tehran with the oil companies would give Iran considerably increased and growing oil revenue, and it can fairly be expected that most of these revenues will be used for the purchase of arms.

Iran's chauvinistic ambitions in the Gulf find a ready echo in recent statements of the Shah and other responsible state leaders. The Shah said, "We will double or even treble our armed forces if the need arises."[51] Iran is not alone in her venture to dominate the Persian Gulf. There is reason to believe that Pakistan is colluding with Iran in this new power game in the Gulf and the Western portion of the Indian Ocean. The two countries have lately had joint naval exercises. On 1 July 1971, Iran's Foreign Minister, Zahidi, declared that "Iran would fight along with Pakistan".[52] It is not improbable that Pakistan, Iran and Saudi Arabia might be planning, under the patronage of Western powers, a naval alliance. It was generally thought that Saudi Arabia was only a land power in the Persian Gulf region (which she is predominantly), but of late she is developing her naval arm as well. She has allocated $140 million for her naval development programme which

includes acquisition of torpedo boats and medium-range submarines.[53] Iran is on her way to influencing the Arabs on the other coast of the Gulf. On 16 July 1971, a border agreement was signed with Bahrain, followed by a visit of the Iranian Foreign Minister, Zahidi. Zahidi told his Bahrain hosts, "We shall give Bahrain whatever it needs any time. Our Bahrain brothers can be sure of our support and understanding in whatever course they choose for their future."[54] This is in addition to Iran's cordial relations with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. All these developments point to the future domination of the Persian Gulf by Iran with the blessings of the United States. Already Iran has started moving in this direction with the forcible occupation of the two strategic Tumb islands at the mouth of the Gulf and by establishing a military base in Abu Musa.

NOTES

[1] *The Times* (London), 15 July 1958.

[2] *Parliamentary* Debates, House of Commons, Vol. 756, col. 1580.

[3] *Ibid.*, col. 1581.

[4] *The Times* (London), 12 January 1968.

[5] *Summary of World Broadcast*, Part IV (BBC London), hereafter cited as SWB, 18 January 1968, p. ME/2672/A.

[6] *Arab World* (Beirut), 18 January 1968, p. 2.

[7] Quoted in *Arab World*, 22 January 1968, p. 6.

[8] Cited in SWB, 20 January 1968, p. ME/2674/A/9.

[9] *SWB*, 24 January 1968, p. ME/2677/A/6.

[10] *SWB*, 20 January 1968, p. ME/2674/A/3.

[11] See the Communique in *SWB*, 18 January 1968, p. ME/2672/D/1.

[12] *Arab World*, 23 January 1968, p. 1.

[13] *Ibid.*, 22 January 1968, p. 8.

[14] *Arab World*, 19 January 1968, p. 3.

[15] Quoted in *Arab World*, 18 January 1968, p. 2.

[16] For details of the progress in the formation of this Federation see William D. Brewer, "Yesterday and Tomorrow in the Persian Gulf," *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 23, No. 2, Spring 1969, pp.

149-58; also the "Chronology" in the above journal, Vols. 22-24, 1968-70.

[17] For details see *Keesings' Contemporary Archives*, pp. 23998-9.

[18] A joint Anglo-U.S. panel study on the Persian Gulf came to the conclusion that the British decision to withdraw was "precipitate" and that Britain would have been "wiser to maintain the more flexible withdrawal date". (*The Gulf: Implications of British Withdrawal*, The Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University, Special Report Series No. 8, Washington D.C., February 1969, p. 4). This study pointed out the vital economic and strategic importance of the Gulf for the Western Powers and recommended a "new political framework" in the area supported by an "increased naval presence" which would be "feasible after a settlement in Vietnam" (p. 13). The value of Gulf oil to Britain is $ 500 million per year and its total contribution to the U.S. and British balance of payments is between $1.5 billion and $2 billion (p. 5).

[19] *The Arab World*, 19 July 1971, p. 4.

[20] *The Times* (London), 16 August 1971; also *Jerusalem Post*, 16 August 1971.

[21] *Kayhan* (Teheran), 4 September 1971.

[22] *New York Times*, 24 July 1971.

[23] Abu Musa island belongs to Sharjah, and the two Tumb island, i.e. Tumb and Nabiyu Tumb, belong to Ras al-Khaima. See Donald Hawley, *The Trucial States*, London, 1970, pp. 287-8. Iranian troops occupied these islands on 30 November 1971.

[24] The total area of the Arabian Peninsula is over 1,200,000 square miles, out of which 927,000 square miles are in Saudi Arabia, i.e., more than 3/4th, though Yemen, which is less than 1/12th of Saudi Arabia in area, is greater in population. But the population figures are the least dependable in this Peninsula.

[25] *The Arab World*, 13 April 1971.

[26] *The Arab World*, 11 May 1971, p. 5.

[27] In April 1969 a powerful Iraqi delegation under the chairmanship of Hardan Tikriti, the Deputy Prime Minister, had made a tour of the Gulf Shaikhdoms. *Daily Telegraph*, 11 April 1969.

[28] On 17 April 1970 the Baghdad-based pan-Arab command of the Baath party issued a strongly-worded warning against the imperialists and the reactionaries. See *Arab World Weekly*, 9 May 1970, p. 16.

[29] See for details, Beasley, *op. cit.*

[30] *Ibid.*

[31] *Ibid.*

[32] G. L. Bondarevsky, "The Continuing Western Interests in Oman," *New Middle East*, No. 35, August 1971, p. 11.

[33] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

[34] David Holden, "The Persian Gulf: After the British Raj," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 49, No. 4, July 1971, pp. 730, 735.

[35] William Luce, "A Naval Force for the Gulf, Balancing Inevitable Russian Penetration," *Roundtable*, No. 236, 29 October 1969. p. 355.

[36] Robert R. Sullivan, "The Architecture of Western Security in the Persian Gulf," *Orbis*, Vol. XIV, Spring 1970, No. 1, pp. 71-9.

[37] *Daily Star* (Beirut), 18 September 1971.

[38] *Ibid.*, 28 September 1971, and *Kayhan* (Teheran), 27 September 1971.

[39] *Daily Star*, 1 October 1971.

[40] See Chronology in *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 22, No. 2, 1968, p. 179.

[41] The *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 22, No. 2, 1968, Chronology, p. 179.

[42] *New York Times*, 19 February 19.

[43] *Ibid.*, 22 May 1968.

[44] *Ibid.*, 12 June 1968.

[45] *Ibid.*, 13 June 1968.

[46] *The Middle East Journal*, Vol. 22, No. 3, 1968, Chronology, pp. 328-29.

[47] *New York Times*, 19 September 1968.

[48] *Ibid.*, 24 October 1969.

[49] *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 23, No. 3, 1969, Chronology, p. 369.

[50] *Ibid.*, p. 370.

[51] Hossein Amir Sadighi, "Iran's New Outward Look," *New Middle East* (London), No. 35, August 1971.

[52] I.D.S.A., *News Review on East Asia, Australia and West Asia* (Part II) July 1971, p. 5.

[53] *Ibid.*, p, 14.

[54] *Ibid.*, p. 10.

CHAPTER SIX

INDIA AND THE INDIAN OCEAN

Although many nations, both from and outside the region, have an important interest in the Indian Ocean as a highway of international trade, none else perhaps is more vitally interested than India. For while the shores of countries like South Africa, Malaysia and Indonesia are washed also by the Atlantic and the Pacific Ocean, and other African countries are mainly continental, and the Persian Gulf region a more or less naturally protected area, India is one of the four countries (Burma, Ceylon and Pakistan being the other three) which exclusively depend on the Indian Ocean.

Yet for a long time the importance of the Indian Ocean for the security and commerce of India was not adequately recognized and most of the Indian historians in the past remained preoccupied with the Himalayas and the land mass beyond the Hindukush on the north-west. This "northern bias" of Indian historians was somewhat natural, as till the advent of the British, all foreign invaders had come from the north-west direction through the mountain passes. Even during the period of British rule, the Central Asian tradition still continued to dominate the Anglo-Indian school of history because of the bogey of Russian advance towards India which the British authorities raised in order to cover up their own aggressive designs in Central Asia.

It was only much later, towards the end of the Second World War, that Indian historians and writers began to realize the importance of the Indian Ocean in the wake of the penetration of the Japanese following the fall of Singapore. K. M. Panikkar highlighted the great significance of the Indian Ocean for the trade and security of India in his works published in 1944-45.[1] Panikkar regretted the "unfortunate tendency to overlook the sea in the discussion of India's defence problems" and remarked: "India never lost her independence till she lost the command of the sea in the first decade of the 16th century."[2]

But as was natural, Panikkar, reacting strongly as he was to the neglect of the Indian Ocean as a factor in Indian history by the previous historians, rather overemphasized the role of India there without taking into account the actual power potential of India to play such a hegemonistic role in the foreseeable future, let alone the desirability of it. Advocating that the "Indian Ocean must remain truly Indian",[3] Panikkar suggested the Albuquerque-style security of India by firmly holding distant bases like Singapore, Mauritius, Aden and Socotra.[4] He also favoured a broadening of the political organization of the Indian empire "so as to include Ceylon and Burma for defence purposes". However, credit must be given to Panikkar for having foreseen the possibility of the Indian Ocean becoming a fulcrum of power struggle in the post-war period. He wrote: "...the possibility has to be visualized of America entering the Indian Ocean as a major naval power,"[5] and commented about the possibility of "a Russian entry" as well which must be "kept in mind". Cautioning against the Chinese thrust, he wrote that the "movement towards the south may, and in all probability will, be reflected in the naval policy of resurgent China."[6]

Panikkar's views received strong support from another Indian writer, K. B. Vaidya, who wrote: "Even if we do not rule the waves of all the five oceans of the world, we must at least rule the waves of the Indian Ocean."[7] This writer gave a call to convert the Indian Ocean into an "Indian lake" which according to him meant that "India must be the supreme and undisputed power over the waters of the Indian Ocean."[8] Vaidya pleaded for the creation of three self-sufficient and full-fledged fleets to be stationed at the Andamans in the Bay of Bengal, in Ceylon at Trincomalee, and at Mauritius guarding the western approaches.

A later study by a team of the Indian Council of World Affairs[9] made in the early years of the 1950s at the suggestion of the New York Institute of Pacific Relations, covered many aspects of the problem of defence and security in the Indian Ocean such as the geographical situation, economic and human factors, specific problems of the countries in the region, and interests of outside powers. While many of the conclusions of this study have become irrelevant owing to political changes both at the regional as well as global levels, it remains significant as the first important work which advanced the theory of a "naval vacuum" in the Indian Ocean.[10] It said:

> With the withdrawal of British naval forces, there exists a vacuum in naval power similar to that which existed off the Chinese mainland before the United States stationed its 7th Fleet there.[11]

But this "vacuum", according to it, could not be filled by any "single nation individually".[12] The reference to the U.S. 7th fleet was obviously a subtle hint for the creation of a multilateral naval force under the aegis of the U.S. led

military alliances to step into Britain's shoes in the Indian Ocean.

The stand taken by the Government of India on the problem of security in the Indian Ocean has been by and large, in conformity with both the traditions of the anticolonial struggle and the country's own enlightened self-interest. Having attained her national freedom after a long struggle against foreign colonial rule, it should be naturally morally repugnant for India to think of dominating her neighbours in the name of safeguarding her security. India's approach has, therefore, got to be one of trying to realize security largely through peaceful regional cooperation. An essential prerequisite for successful regional cooperation in the Indian Ocean area is keeping it free from big power competition and rivalry. Hence India has been insisting that the Indian Ocean should be left alone by the great powers as a sea of peace—a demand endorsed by nearly 60 nations at the Lusaka Conference of non-aligned nations in September 1970.

India has categorically rejected the "vacuum" theory under whose cover the United States desires to establish herself firmly in the Indian Ocean with the help of her allies and some other credulous Asian nations. The Indian Government's stand on the so-called "vacuum" in the Indian Ocean was elaborated by Swaran Singh as the Defence Minister in the Lok Sabha on 10 April 1968. Swaran Singh's statement deserves to be quoted at some length. He said:

> Government do not accept the validity of the propaganda that a vacuum will be created in the Indian Ocean on the British decision to withdraw from the areas east of Suez....It is not our intention firstly to accept

the validity of this concept that any vacuum can be created. If any foreign power leaves any particular area, then it is for that area and for that territory to take adequate steps to safeguard their own safety and their own country. If they ask any other country for help, that could be considered, but when even a country like the U.K. is withdrawing from overseas commitments, for a country like India, which has never believed in that concept, to think in these terms, is absolutely inconsistent with our approach to this problem.[13]

To the Jan Sangh leader Balraj Madhok's query "whether the British built up their naval power in the Indian Ocean because they had their own interests, whether India has no interests in Indian Ocean beyond its coast", Swaran Singh replied:

> ...the build up of the British Navy for colonial purposes is well-known subject matter of history and even lay men should know that much history that by building a strong navy they were able to dominate a good part of the world and created colonies, and we also became slaves at that time.[14]

Again, speaking on a call-attention motion in the Rajya Sabha on 8 May 1969 on a statement by a Naval Study Group at the Defence Services Staff college,[15] Swaran Singh decried the talk about a "vacuum". He did not agree with the view that the British withdrawal from the Indian Ocean would affect India in any way. Swaran Singh told the Rajya Sabha that "the British presence was not in our interest".[16]

Similarly, on 19 March 1969, the External Affairs Minister, Dinesh Singh, strongly rebuffed the advocates of the "vacuum" theory. He said:

> I have not been able to understand one point. Much has been said about the withdrawal of the British Navy. Apparently, according to them, if the British Navy is there, everything is alright.[17]

On another occasion in his speech in the Lok Sabha on 8 April 1970, Dinesh Singh called the British Navy "a symbol of domination in Asia". He said he was "surprised and in many ways humiliated when my countrymen say 'what will happen if the British go away'". The Indian reaction to the British withdrawal from the Indian Ocean has thus been one of welcoming it as a process of decolonization and having complete faith in the capacity of the new Asian countries "to meet the challenges that come with a measure of self-respect, dignity and self-reliance without looking to Washington or Moscow."

India is opposed to the extension of the big power naval competition in the Indian Ocean and the establishment of foreign bases there. Yet at times this policy was allowed to be diluted, perhaps on account of the fear of China. Thus when Ceylon and Indonesia protested against the entry of the U.S. 7th Fleet into the Indian Ocean in December 1963, India did not at all react strongly against it. Nehru, though he denied that India was consulted by the U.S. Government about sending their fleet, stated in his Lok Sabha statement of 19 December 1963, that "if the U.S. Government decides to do this, all that we need say, today, it that outside the territorial waters of India, the Ocean is, naturally, open to them."[18]

He tried to underplay the fears expressed in many progressive circles about an increase in tension in the region as a result of the linking up of SEATO and NATO through the 7th Fleet cruise, and said in reply to a supplementary question by Vasudevan Nair of the CPI that he did not think "any particular concern need be caused to the counries here" as "most of the countries in South East Asia are more or less allied to the U.S. Government."[19] Nehru went to the extent of calling it "sight-seeing, seeing the waters, etc."[20]

General Taylor's visit to India, his meeting with Nehru just two days before the entry of the 7th Fleet, and the U.S. proposal for an "air umbrella" for India's defence led to various speculations about India's tacit support to the U.S. move in the Indian Ocean. Nehru's statement in the Rajya Sabha on 21 December 1963 – "It would be quite wrong to suggest that a cruise by a few U.S. naval vessels in the Indian Ocean either threatens our freedom, or imperils our policy of non-alignment"—further added to misgivings about India's position. Despite the solemn assurance given by Nehru in the same statement that no foreign ships, troops, or aircraft would participate in the country's "actual defence", a misunderstanding about India having a hand in the extension of the operation of the U.S. Seventh Fleet to the Indian Ocean persisted for quite some time.

On the question of the establishment of bases in the Indian Ocean, too, India's stand, though one of opposition in general, was at times liable to be misunderstood, and left many things rather vague. Thus, when in July 1965, the Maldives gained independence, the retention of the Gan base by the British evoked no protest from India whatsoever, and later the same year when Britain and the

United States began their preparations for setting up bases on the British Indian Ocean Territory, there was no strong reaction in New Delhi beyond a statement by the then Deputy Minister for External Affairs, Dinesh Singh, in the Rajya Sabha on a call attention motion by I. K. Gujral, which said that the "Government of India's policy in regard to bases in the Indian Ocean has been one of strong opposition".[21] When members insisted on knowing about the specific steps taken to register our protest in the international forum and to call a meeting of the affected countries, the Government only referred to the unanimous resolution passed at the Cairo Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries condemning the setting up of bases in the Indian Ocean. When Gujral had earlier raised the issue of bases, the Foreign Minister had made a statement saying that they were only to be communication bases. Later Dinesh Singh put a different gloss on it by stating that the Government had not intended to condone those bases and was only sharing the information available to them. He declared: "We do not welcome the setting up of communication bases and we have not welcomed it."[22]

Yet the ambiguity about the Indian Government's stand on Indian Ocean bases could not be fully dispelled. The matter again came up for discussion in the Lok Sabha in 1967. Foreign Minister M. C. Chagla, while monotonously repeating the Government's earlier statement that they were against any foreign military bases in the Indian Ocean, showed his readiness to accept the Anglo-American version that they were not establishing military bases. On 6 April 1967, Chagla said: "All that we can do, for the time being, is to accept their statements that they do not propose to use these islands as military bases." This was in

fact going back upon the stand earlier taken by Dinesh Singh of opposition to all bases including the communication bases, and what Chagla said simply echoed the British version.[28] The Minister was even reluctant to straight away use the word "protest" for the Government's communications to the British Government on the subject. When George Fernandes asked him if they had made protests, Chagla replied that "apart from making inquiries we have made representations which amount to protests". On 5 June 1967, Chagla offered the usual British apologia to Nambiar's charge that the Government was ignoring the country's defence interests by allowing a great power to establish bases so near to its shores, and asked him "to realize that the U.K. has a defence agreement with Australia and Malaysia and with Hongkong, and these islands were necessary for her transit and staging facilities and so they are carrying out arrangements for that purpose".[24]

Chagla's assurance "that the Government would try to mobilize public opinion of like-minded countries to see that these islands do not in any way prejudice the security of the countries bordering on the Indian Ocean", came to nothing. Apart from agreeing, under the pressure of the Afro-Asian group, to be one of the sponsors of a resolution in the U.N. Trusteeship Council condemning the British plan as being contrary to the U.N. Charter, no other effective steps were taken by India in this direction, and instead of India mobilizing other countries, we on occasions watched the spectacle of others mobilizing us against the foreign bases in the region.

But these ambiguities were soon removed and vacillations overcome in time. Before long the Indian policy resumed its old initiative and drive. If there were some illusions about the Western military presence in the Indian

Ocean serving the containment of China, they were as speedily dissipated as they had arisen and the danger to the security of the region as a result of its becoming a scene of big-power naval competition was clearly realized. Rival fleets and military bases in these hitherto placid waters could one day impinge on Indian security as dangerously as the U.S. military aid to Pakistan. Hence the old accent on keeping the Indian Ocean region free from rival military alliances was again revived.

Launching the frigate *Nilgiri* in October 1968, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi expressed the hope that the Ocean would always remain "an area of peace and a bridge of understanding" between the littoral nations.[25] Addressing the Indian Journalists' Association in London in January 1969, the Prime Minister declared that India wanted the Indian Ocean to remain an Ocean of peace and hoped that any country that entered it "will keep that in mind".[26] On 19 March 1969, Foreign Minister Dinesh Singh told the Lok Sabha that India had made it known to all countries including the Soviet Union that "it wants the Indian Ocean area to be free from conflict and free from any nuclear weapons". This demand was reiterated in the joint communique issued after the visit of the Prime Minister of Mauritius, Seewoosagur Ramgoolam to India in December 1969, and also included in the joint communique issued after Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's visit to Mauritius in June 1970. It was also endorsed by 60 non-aligned nations at the Lusaka Conference in September 1970.

At the Singapore Conference of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers in January 1971, India took a line of strong opposition to the British sale of arms to South Africa and highlighted the danger posed to the interest of the littoral states by the transformation of the Indian Ocean into an

arena of great-power rivalry. Foreign Minister Swaran Singh who represented India at the Conference, expressed "concern" at the arrival of "the power game" in the Indian Ocean, until now a peaceful ocean. Describing the Soviet threat as "hypothetical", the Indian Foreign Minister said that the littoral states were "far more concerned over the growth of South African military power".[27] He also opposed the construction of an Anglo-American base at Diego Garcia which, he warned, would only bring in other big-powers. At a press conference in Singapore on 21 January 1971, Swaran Singh denied the existence of a Soviet threat. "All that had happened," he said, "was that Soviet ships had begun patrolling the area, thus breaking the British monopoly in this regard." He also added that "India would like all Big Powers, including the Soviet Union, United States, France and Britain, to leave the area alone."[28]

India's present policy in the Indian Ocean has for its long-term objective the creation of a regional security system without big-power interference and primarily through non-military means by mutually beneficial economic cooperation between the nations of the area. Experience has taught that the involvement of the Asian nations in the military alliances only increases tensions in the area and adds to their insecurity. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's proposal of March 1967 for a convention among the nations of Asia ensuring respect for independence and sovereignty and territorial integrity of the countries of the region and neutrality of such countries as wish to remain neutral, is typical of the Indian approach to security in the Indian Ocean. The proposed Convention should be signed by not only all the countries of the region, but also by great powers, and should incorporate, besides the five principles of peaceful coexistence, the concept of economic, cultural, scientific

and technical cooperation.[29]

There is a good deal in common between the Indian and Soviet approach to regional security. Both have nothing to do with military blocs directed against definite states or groups of states, and aim at embracing all the states of a given geographical region. Both believe that security could only be ensured by collective efforts through commitments undertaken by all countries, or on a regional basis, and insist that far from replacing the U.N. Charter, the regional security systems must complement it. The two countries' approach has a further similarity in the great importance they attach to the development of regional economic cooperation for creating a climate conducive to security. The recent Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation is born out of the above common approach of the two countries to the problems of security and economic development and is not directed against any state or group of states. It would augur well for the future of a regional security system in Asia if the Asian countries agreed to a convention on renunciation of threat or use of force for settling disputes between them. This could serve as a basis for the realization of the idea of an Asian Collective Security System and an Indian Ocean Community, which must remain, with the present intra-regional conflicts between the various states of the region and the Anglo-American intrusion and Chinese waywardness, a long-term goal.

The Ceylonese approach to the problem of security in the Indian Ocean as outlined in the Ceylon Government Memorandum on Indian Ocean security, submitted to the Singapore Conference of Commonwealth Heads of Government held in January 1971, also stresses a step-by-step gradual realization of regional security in stages. The memorandum points out that the Indian Ocean is a region

of "low solidarity" or community of interests. Although it forms a geographical and historical entity, there are few cooperative links between countries in the region and these are either bilateral or sub-regional.[30] A peace zone will provide the countries of the region time to develop trends towards integration and cooperation. It is intended to be a transitional phase for the development of an Indian Ocean Community in which problems of security will be dealt with by orderly and institutional means for promoting peaceful change. Lately Ceylon has moved the United Nations to declare the Indian Ocean a "Zone of Peace".[31]

The Indian proposal of the Indian Ocean as an area of peace, free from nuclear weapons and big-power navies, which enjoys the support of Ceylon, Mauritius and numerous other Afro-Asian countries of the area, is not unrealistic as some critics have described it. For an already strife-torn region the intrusion of Western and Russian navies would not be a welcome counterweight to Chinese and Japanese naval forces as Malaysia and Singapore think. This kind of precarious balance obtained by the naval presence of the big powers cancelling out one another would ill-serve the cause of security and peace.[32] The big powers from outside the region are likely to form antagonistic groupings among the countries of the area and try to exploit their differences. This would only create further tensions. An intensification of cold war politics in the Indian Ocean as the Ceylonese Memorandum has stated, is likely to result in a "blurring of distinctions between cold war and colonial issues". It is only through self-reliance and by their own cooperative efforts that the littoral countries can develop a dependable system of security. For this it is essential that they should be left alone.

To say that having already moved into the Indian Ocean

the great powers are unlikely to be deterred by Indian or Afro-Asian protests, and hence India and other nations of the area should readjust their policy to the harsh realities of life, is to advocate a cynical policy of drift towards tensions and conflicts in utter disregard of the vital national interests of the countries concerned. There are many matters in which the small and medium powers, due to their limited power potential, cannot prevent the big powers from acting in a particular way. But this does not mean that they should continually acquiesce to the policies of the great powers in a servile manner and not offer their concerted opposition.

Moreover, the present international situation is also somewhat more favourable for realizing the idea of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean. At least one super power has declared its willingness to withdraw its navy from the Indian Ocean and other distant oceans as well. As referred earlier, Leonid Brezhnev in his 12 June speech at an election meeting in Moscow, described "the situation when the navies of Great Powers sailing for a long time at the other end of the world away from their native coasts" as not "an ideal situation", and declared his country's readiness to solve this problem provided the other great powers were also ready to solve it on the basis of "an equal bargain".[33] This facilitates the task of the Indian Ocean nations, as they have only to bring pressure on the United States and Britain to agree to withdraw their navies. The British Labour Party at its Brighton Conference on 7 October 1971, passed a resolution calling on Western powers to take up the offer Brezhnev recently made to Indira Gandhi during her Moscow visit, to enter into discussions with other powers to achieve the objective of creation of a peace zone in the Indian Ocean.[34] A continuation of the Western presence can now no longer be justified after the

Soviet declaration of their readiness to order a withdrawal of their navy on a reciprocal basis. The need of the hour is to take immediate steps to reverse the trend towards militarization of the Ocean and convert the negative concept of a "power vacuum" into a positive idea of a Peace Zone. India being a major power of the region should not relent her efforts in this direction.

Apart from working for her long-range objective of establishing a peace zone in the Indian Ocean free from military confrontation, India is building up the naval capability to protect her long coastline as well as the outlying islands of Andaman and Nicobar. Having thus far concentrated on the army and the air force, the government is now giving a serious thought to the strengthening of the Indian Navy. This is proposed to be done not with an object of dominating the Ocean which is named after the country and converting it into an "Indian Lake", but to safeguard the country's security from any aggression from the sea. The Government's position was made clear by a remark made in the Lok Sabha by Dinesh Singh, then Foreign Minister, on 19 March 1969. Singh objected to the use of the expression "our ocean" by a member and requested him to "bear in mind that the Indian Ocean is not our Ocean". He categorically stated: "There is no such thing as the Indian Ocean belonging to India."[35]

The Indian naval budget has gone up in the recent years from 28·27 crore rupees to 74·10 crore, out of which Rs 28·51 crores has been earmarked for capital expenditure. During the current Five Year Plan period of the Indian Navy (1969-74) an expenditure of Rs 525 crore has been envisaged. Till 1965 the biggest navy in the Indian Ocean was that of Indonesia. But Indonesia has since made a drastic cut in her defence expenditure, and for want of

spares, a sizeable strength of the Indonesian Navy is not in operation. The Indian Navy is expected to become the leading navy among the Indian Ocean states commensurate with the size of the country. The Indian merchant marine is also developing. It has a total of 397 ships of 2.238 million gross tons. In the next three years India plans to acquire as many as 350 ships. In shipping tonnage India ranks first among countries bordering the Indian Ocean. Indian ships carry 13.2 per cent of her foreign trade valued at 3 billion dollars. All coastal dry cargo and 23 per cent of coastal oil cargo is carried in Indian ships.[36]

Established in 1934, the Royal Indian Navy was a small force of six frigates and other minor vessels such as mine-sweepers even after the World War II. After partition of the country in 1947 two of these frigates were given to Pakistan. To reduce the sterling balances Britain transferred three old Leander class cruisers of 1927 vintage, and in 1948 one cruiser along with three "R" class destroyers built during the war were obtained by India from Britain. In 1957 another British cruiser was acquired for the Indian Navy which also received in 1961 from Britain an aircraft career.[37]

The Indian Navy with its ageing British vessels from the Second World War is now getting a new look through a modernization and re-equipment programme. But as the country cannot afford a new carrier or a cruiser, modernization is proceeding from smaller ships. According to Ernest Weatherall, the defence correspondent of the *Christian Science Monitor*, Indian naval thinking has shifted from larger capital ships to reliance on smaller, faster, more hard-hitting ships, such as destroyer escorts, motor torpedo boats, submarines and patrol craft which eventually would mean scrapping the carrier *Vikrant*.[38]

In its programme of modernization and re-equipment the Indian Navy has received invaluable help from the Soviet Union. Britain has been reluctant to extend credit facilities to India for acquiring new ships. Moreover, the cost of British ships is also rather high. The United States imposed an embargo on the sale of defence equipment to India after the 1965 war with Pakistan. K. Subhramanyam writes:

> Under these circumstances, when naval equipment was not available from two major maritime powers, the United States and the United Kingdom, India had no choice but to turn to the Soviet Union.[39]

Thus all the new ships of the Indian Navy have been supplied by the Soviet Union which has also given four F class submarines. There have been reports about the Soviet Government having agreed to help in the construction of submarines[40] just as they are helping India build MiG 21 supersonic fighters. Admiral Nanda told a conference on maritime trade that India would soon be building submarines and patrol craft.[41] The submarine base at Visakhapatnam which recently came into operation was built with Soviet help.

When the proposed 10 year programme of Rs 800 crore for the modernization of the Indian Navy is carried out, India will have a navy adequate enough to meet the threat to her security from sea by any Indian Ocean power. The present Indian policy of giving proper attention to a balanced maritime and naval development, in addition to conducting a struggle for keeping the Indian Ocean region aloof from the power politics of the big powers, is a sensible policy which fully conforms with the country's

national interests as well as the common interests of peace and security in the Indian Ocean. A policy of military cooperation with a group of states which is often advocated without taking into account the absence of a common approach in foreign policy between them, as also a policy of securing the control of the Indian Ocean by India regardless of the latter's economic resources and the opposition it is bound to meet from the neighbouring states, will be detrimental to India's own national interests and to the peace and security of the region. The fatal consequences of Germany's mad drive to become a supreme naval power should not be overlooked by advocates of an Indian variant of *Flottenpolitik* in the Indian Ocean. Instead of such a suicidal adventurist policy of excessive reliance on military and naval strength, India's policy of forging closer, meaningful, and mutually beneficial economic cooperation with the countries of the region needs to be further activated. The recent treaty with Nepal, the trade pact with Iraq, and the measures outlined by the Indo-Ceylonese joint communique, are small but encouraging developments in this direction. The campaign for the conversion of the Indian Ocean into a nuclear-free zone of peace should be further intensified in cooperation with other littoral states.

NOTES

[1] See K. M. Panikkar, *The Strategic Problems of the Indian Ocean*, Allahabad, 1944; *India and the Indian Ocean: An Essay on the Influence of Sea Power*, London, 1945.

[2] K. M. Panikkar, *India and the Indian Ocean*, p. 14.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 82.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 90.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 87.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 86.

[7] K. B. Vaidya, *The Naval Defence of India*, Bombay, 1947, p. 91.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 101. A more recent echo of these views may be found in an article by the P.S.P. Chairman, N. G. Goray (M.P.), "India should rule the Indian Ocean," *Motherland*, 15 May 1971.

[9] *Defence and Security in the Indian Ocean Area*, Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi, 1958 (with an introduction by General K. M. Cariappa).

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 183.

[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 183.

[13] *Lok Sabha Debates*, Vol XV, cols, 3192-3202, 10 April 1968.

[14] *Ibid.*, cols. 3196-97.

[15] A paper incorporating the views of a naval study group at the Defence Services Staff College was published in the *Hamla* magazine of the Indian Navy under the title "Power Vacuum in the Indian Ocean". The paper described India as potentially powerful enough to influence this area because of her strategic location, size and resources. "It would therefore be a legitimate Indian aspiration to be able to assume her rightful place in the region. The present situation, in the group's view seems most conductive to the formation of an Indian Ocean Community". Somewhat strangely and without giving any serious thought to the difficulty of reconciling a policy of non-alignment vis a vis the Soviet Union and the United States, which it desired to be retained, the group recommended that India should aim at an alliance with Japan, Australia, and Malaysia, and later with Burma, Thailand and Indonesia. The basis of this alliance is to be a common Chinese threat (*Patriot*, 5 May 1969). Many prominent opposition leaders of both the Right and Left have also suggested an alliance with Japan, Australia, Indonesia, Taiwan, Thailand and even South Vietnam.

[16] *National Herald*, 9 May 1969.

[17] *Lok Sabha Debates*, Vol. XXVI, 19 March 1969, col. 4.

[18] *Lok Sabha Debates*, Vol. 24, 1963; 19 December 1963, col. 5768.

[19] Ibid., col. 5772.

[20] *Ibid.*, col. 5770.

[21] *Rajya Sabha Debates*, Vol. 54, Part I, 1965, cols. 1915-22.

[22] *Ibid.*

[23] *Lok Sabha Debates*, Vol. III, 1967, 5 June 1967, cols. 3040-50; See also Vol. II, 6 April 1967, cols. 3207-215.

[24] *Ibid*

[25] *Northern India Patrika*, 26 October 1968.

[26] *National Herald*, 11 January 1969.

[27] *Times of India*, 18 January 1971.

[28] *News Review on Countries Bordering India*, I.D.S.A., New Delhi, February 1971, pp. 43-4.

[29] Dinesh Singh as Foreign Minister described in his speech in the Parliament on 8 April 1970, the Brezhnev plan of Asian security as the same "in many ways as the Prime Minister has said three years ago" (*Lok Sabha Debates*, Vol. 39, 1970, cols. 239-260).

[30] Haris Chandola, "Ceylon Memrandum on Indian Ocean Security," *National Herald*, 16 January 1971.

[31] Addressing the U.N. General Assembly on 12 October 1971, the Ceylonese Prime Minister, Mrs. Bandaranaike, called on the world body to declare the Indian Ocean a Zone of Peace. The Ceylonese plan for a peace zone in the Indian Ocean demands that the area be reserved "exclusively for peaceful purposes under an appropriate regulatory system" to be established under "effective international control". Manoeuvres by warships, naval intelligence operations and weapons tests will be forbidden in the area (*Ceylon Daily News*, 3 October 1971).

[32] Pakistani thinking is that it is only with "complete understanding and cooperation among all the countries in the area" that outside powers could be asked "to keep away from the Indian Ocean", and since that is not the case because of a large country's (India) alleged ambition to dominate its small neighbours, Pakistan hopes "that the presence of the navies of several great powers, with their divergent interests, will inhibit aggressive action by any one of them and also have a moderating effect on India's ambitions" (see Latif Ahmad, "Realities of the Indian Ocean Area: A Pakistani Evaluation," p. 26, a paper presented at the Georgetown University International Conference on Indian Ocean, 1971).

[33] *Pravda*, 13 June 1971.

[34] Of late, the demand for neutralization of the Indian Ocean has won support in other influential British circles. Thus D.C. Watt in his recent article "Britain and the Indian Ocean: Diplomacy Before Defence" (*Political Quarterly*, Vol. 42, No. 3, July-September, 1971, pp. 306-16) writes: "The most promising line to explore would be that of neutralization or restriction on the number of ships of non-littoral navies alowed in the Indian Ocean at any one time." In an earlier article "The Decision to Withdraw From the Gulf" (*Political Quarterly*, July 1968), Watt had argued against the British withdraway. Similarly, the Australian leader of the opposition, Whitlam, declared at a press conference in Brisbane "that a labour government would back moves by Ceylon and India which have been put to the U.N., calling on the Big Powers to refrain from making the Indian Ocean their arena for a naval arms race." (*The Australian*, 18 October 1971).

[35] *Lok Sabha Debates*, Vol. XXVI, 19 March 1969, col.. 1

[36] A.P.S. Bindra, "The Indian Ocean As Seen By An Indian',,

Proceedings, U.S. Naval Institute, May 1970, Vol. 96, No. 5/807, p. 192.

[37] R. Kaul (Lt. Commander), "India's Russian Navy.' *Proceedings, U.S. Naval Institute*, August 1970, Vol. 96, No. 8/810, p. 40.

[38] *Christian Science Monitor*, 20 August 1968.

[39] K. Subrahmanyam, "Soviet Military Assistance" (a paper presented at the New Delhi Seminar on Indo-Soviet Cooperation, 8 November 1970), *Indo-Soviet Cooperation*, I.S.C.U.S., New Delhi, 1971, pp. 39-40. R. Kaul also writes: "India has never made any request for military hardware to the Soviets without first approaching the West, and only after the West's refusal to provide comparable defence hardware has India turned to the Soviet Union which has been too ready to oblige" (*op. cit.*, p. 40). For an account of India's unsuccessful efforts to procure naval equipment from Britain and the United States see T. V. Kunhi Krishnan's, *Chavan and the Troubled Decade* (Bombay, 1971), pp. 106-114.

[40] *New York Times*, 3 January 1971, p. 36.

[41] *Ibid.* Three Leander class frigates are planned to be built at Bombay with British collaboration.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

The need for the establishment of a security system in the Indian Ocean—the smallest of oceans, with the bulk of the world population living along its shores[1]—cannot be overemphasized. The intrusion of the big-power naval competition into the hitherto placid waters of the Indian Ocean has made the security problem of the region further complicated.

Faced with strong opposition to their neo-colonial aggressive designs from the popular forces in Asia and Africa, the United States is trying to consolidate her hold on the Indian Ocean by sedulously propagating the myth of British "withdrawal", the consequent "vacuum" and the so-called imperative of filling it up with multilateral alliances under the Anglo-American aegis to forestall the "historic" Russian drive to the warm waters in the south. A five-power pact comprising Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia as proposed by the U.S. Under Secretary of State, Rostow, in January 1968, the British project of a Federation of Arab Amirates in the Persian Gulf under their tutelage (only partially achieved due to the internal rivalries of the Arab Shaikhs and influence of the states around) and a five-power pact in South East Asia, are the cornerstone on which the Western Powers plan to raise the future edifice of a new system of military alliances

to replace the ageing CENTO and SEATO.

Control of the Indian Ocean region is considered by the Western Powers as "dominant in shaping world politics". Apart from the great importance of the region on account of its raw material and mineral reserves (it contains more than two-thirds of the world's oil reserves, 60 per cent of uranium, 40 per cent of gold and 98 per cent of the world's supply of diamonds), it has currently become all the more important following a change in the global strategy of nuclear warfare placing greater reliance on undersea long-range missiles. Its location to the south of the Soviet Union's soft belly makes the Indian Ocean an eminently suitable area for deployment of such a system planned by the United States for the 1970s.

The states of the Indian Ocean, an area torn by internal strifes and cleavages, many of them a legacy of the colonial past are no doubt far less homogenous in terms of cultural, economic, and ideological foundations. There are several distinct civilizations—Buddhist, Islamic, Hindu, and Christian—and levels of political and economic development are also widely different. Yet they all share a common historical experience of Western colonial rule which induces a common reaction to many international issues relating to colonialism and racialism, and an aspiration for economic development and social progress are also common to them. Hence, given persistent and sincere efforts and elimination of outside interference, there is no doubt that the states of this region can evolve into a distinct community having its own regional system of security in course of time.

Many of the difficulties facing the region today have either been transplanted from outside or they are rooted in external interference. Attempts have been made by

some Western publicists and West-oriented Asian writers to lay all the blame for infighting and dissension upon the Asians and Africans themselves.[2] They conveniently ignore the fact that it was the West which, twice since the end of the Second World War, brought large-scale death and destruction to Asians, first in Korea and then in Vietnam. Again, it were the Western powers that, along with Israel, invaded Egypt in 1956 and landed their troops in Lebanon and Jordan in 1958. But for the pumping of 2 billion dollars of U.S. armaments into Pakistan, there would perhaps have been no Indo-Pak war in 1965 and no bloodbath in East Bengal, where the U.S. administration is helping the West Pakistani military junta with money and arms to suppress the freedom struggle.

The situation in the Indian Ocean area may in fact be compared in many ways with the Balkans in the 19th and early 20th centuries where extraneous interest in the inner conflicts of the region made their settlement well-nigh impossible and even sparked off a world conflagration. An essential prerequisite for successful regional cooperation, and through it the creation of a regional security system eventually, is to keep it free from the power rivalry and naval competition of the outside big powers whose presence will only further fan the intra-regional conflicts. With the Soviet Union agreeing to withdraw her Navy from the Indian Ocean provided the Western powers, too, do the same, the littoral states should mobilize their efforts to put pressure on the powers concerned to start negotiations over this question. A declaration by the U.N. on the necessity of establishing a nuclear-free zone of peace in the Indian Ocean will also focus world opinion on this vital problem.

But keeping the big powers' military away from the

Indian Ocean alone will not create a system of security in the region. Such a system cannot be created overnight. The road to collective security, it must be realized, is not an easy one and will take considerable time and effort. It needs step by step efforts at all levels—unilateral, bilateral, multilateral, regional and even global. It is hoped that the development of closer regional economic cooperation, and the conclusion of a convention among the countries of the area on renunciation of threat or use of force for settlement of disputes, will go a long way in creating a climate conducive to security. India being an important power of the region, has a special responsibility for continuing her efforts in this direction with added vigour. The recent success in tackling the problem of European security should serve as an inspiring example for India and other countries interested in the attainment of security. It is after more than two decades of persistent effort by the Soviet Union that possibilities of a Conference on European Security have become real enough today.

To achieve more meaningful and closer regional economic cooperation among the states of the Indian Ocean which forms an important phase in the creation of a regional system of security, it is essential to replace American and Japanese dominated institutions like ASPAC, ASEAN and Asian Bank by new institutions with a broad-based regional membership. It is not an easy task, but it is time to get down to the spadework for the future Indian Ocean Community, undeterred by the difficulties created by the American and Chinese desire to dominate the region and Pakistan's antipathy for India. The world's most populous zone must become a zone of lasting peace.

NOTES

[1] According to *Editorial Research Reports* (Washington D. C.) of 10 March 1971, one billion people, i.e., one-third of the world's total population live in the Indian Ocean basin.

[2] See Werner Levi, "The Elitist Nature of New Asia's Foreign Policy," *Asian Survey*, November 1967, p. 773. The writer presents the distorted Western view of Asia as a region "shot through with high tensions, mutual suspicions, border violations, breaches of diplomatic relations and the use of violence". Bhabani Sen Gupta goes a step ahead to pronounce: "It seems that imperialism of anti-imperialists is going to be a major cause of tension and conflict in the third world in the years to come." (*The Fulcrum of Asia*, New York, 1970, p. XIV).

POSTSCRIPT

A new situation has emerged in the Indian Ocean area at the time the manuscript was ready for the press. The cataclysmic event of the break-up of Pakistan and the birth of an independent Bangla Desh, a new nation of 75 million, population-wise eighth in the world and fifth in Asia, has violently upset the old power balance in the region, artificially sustained by the United States joined lately by China. The rise of Bangla Desh represents the triumph of the biggest armed struggle for national liberation in the Indian Ocean area. Its importance also lies in its success in the face of opposition by two major powers.

During the fourteen-day war between India and Pakistan in December 1971, the Sino-U.S. collusion came to the surface. Washington worked in unison with Peking in further fanning the fire of conflict on the subcontinent. Preoccupied with an internal power struggle and fearing a direct confrontation with the Soviet Union, which warned outside powers not to aggravate the Indo-Pakistan conflict, China desisted from intervening directly in favour of Pakistan. But in the United Nations, she closely cooperated in the efforts of the United States to put India in the dock as an aggressor. Peking not only acquiesced in President Nixon's resort to the discredited 19th century Gunboat Diplomacy, but actively connived at it. A prominent daily of Australia was not off the mark when it hinted at an "unstated arrangement" between America and China "to preserve the Asian balance of power" and called the *Enterprise* mission "part of that process" (*The Australian*, 17 December 1971).

The despatch of the U.S. Seventh Fleet task forces of ten

warships to the Indian Ocean during the Indo-Pakistan conflict once again highlighted the threat to the national liberation movement and the peace and security of the region posed by the American naval power. Interrupting its prolonged participation in the war against the people of Indo-China, the Seventh Fleet moved into the Bay of Bengal for a futile exercise in browbeating the freedom-loving people ot Bangla Desh and playing on India's nerves in a bid to boost the sagging morale of the West Pakistani military junta. The official explanation for sending the *Enterprise*—for evacuation of U.S. nationals—never found credence in India, and the recent disclosures by Jack Anderson of the secret official papers have shown that the real objective was to detract Indian forces and thereby relieve India's naval and air pressure on the entrapped Pakistani army.

The Seventh Fleet Force continued its manoeuvres near the southern coast of India long after the U.S. bluff was called by the people of India and Bangla Desh. Pentagon spokesman, Friedheim, openly declared on 7 January: "We are interested in the area and we would like to have the capability to operate there." It is believed that the United States would be sending far more powerful task forces into the Indian Ocean, and more frequently. Washington has decided to beef up its naval strength in Bahrain in the Persian Gulf. By an exchange of letters with Bahrain it has secured the continuation of naval facilities after the expiry of the British-Bahrain Treaty.

The facilities enjoyed by the U.S. on Diego Garcia island and on several Australian bases are also being improved. Diego Garcia, which was originally described as a mere communication centre, has now an airfield large enough for the operation of fighter-bombers and C-130 and C-141 giant transport planes. The U.S. defence budget

for the financial year 1972-73 has authorized an additional expenditure of 6.3 billion dollars on new strategic weapons with 900 million earmarked for the development of the Undersea Long Range Missile System (ULMS). This clearly indicates that America is not inclined to agree to any suggestion for the creation of a nuclear-free peace zone in the Indian Ocean.

In an attempt to justify the Nixon Administration's policy of opposition to forces of freedom and progress in the subcontinent, influential American statesmen and journalists are voicing their "concern" over India granting naval facilities to the Soviet Union. Thus, James Reston looks at the December conflict on the subcontinent not as a freedom struggle of the Bangla Desh people, but as a "power play" by Moscow. Accusing the Soviet Union of pursuing "Russia's historic ambitions", he sees "access for Moscow's rising naval power to the Indian Ocean" as the outcome of India-Pakistan war. In his article "The Winner in the India-Pakistan War" (*International Herald Tribune*, 18-19 December 1971), Reston warned that the end of the fourteen-day war was "certainly not the last chapter". He predicted "a closer relationship between Washington and Peking" in the wake of this conflict.

From the very beginning Pakistan has occupied an important place in the U.S. Indian Ocean strategy. As early as December 1951, President Truman's Report to the Congress referred to Pakistan as a "valuable ally in South Asia because of its strategic location in the Indian Ocean". The value of Pakistan for the U.S. was enhanced in the context of the growing Sino-U.S. rapprochement. Pakistan also acquired importance in the Chinese hegemonistic aspirations in this part of the world. Although the break-up of Pakistan has removed the Chinese threat in the Bay of Ben-

gal, it has not entirely eliminated the possibilities of Chinese intrigues in the Indian Ocean. China has access to the Indian Ocean at Karachi through the newly built Karakoram Gilgit road.

That the United States and China would be looking forward to an opportunity to undo the natural balance of forces in South Asia that has now emerged, cannot be ruled out. India is likely to become the main target of the Sino-U.S. machinations in the Indian Ocean as it is the only power which has the strength and determination to checkmate their hegemonistic aspirations and designs.

The power game thus continues to menace peace and tranquillity in the Indian Ocean area. Recent events have only confirmed it. Besides collaborating with China, the United States is also planning to use Britain and France, which did not oppose Bangla Desh, as the Trojan horse for furthering her designs. Britain is, even as she pulls out of the Persian Gulf, getting more enmeshed in the domestic affairs of Muscat and Oman. The so called British Special Air Service is actively participating in the air operations there. Britain also supported Iran in the latter's occupation of the islands of Tumb and helped her in reaching a settlement with Sharjah over Abu Musa. She handed over her naval base in Bahrain to the United States. Lately, France has also decided to show the flag in the Indian Ocean. Under President Pompidou she appears to be slowly sliding back into the NATO.

In the wake of the U.N. General Assembly resolution of 17 December 1971 regarding the declaration of Indian Ocean as a peace zone, Washington has announced its decision to maintain a more permanent presence in these waters and to step up the budget allocation for the development of ULMS. In his recently published book, *Gunboat Diplomacy*, James

Cable rightly visualizes an expansion of the "diplomatic and political functions of the U.S. Navy" (pp. 126-127). The Indian Ocean cruise of the *Enterprise* casts an ominous shadow of the events to come.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX I

EXCERPTS FROM PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES ON THE INDIAN OCEAN

U.S. SEVENTH FLEET EXTENDING ITS OPERATION INTO THE INDIAN OCEAN

Calling Attention to a Matter of Urgent Public Importance

Nath Pai (Rajapur): I call the attention of the Prime Minister to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon: The U.S. 7th Fleet extending its operation into the Indian Ocean and Government of India's reactions thereto.

Jawaharlal Nehru (Prime Minister, Minister of External Affairs and Minister of Atomic Energy): There have been newspaper reports to suggest that the United States Government was extending the operational sphere of its Seventh Fleet from the China Seas to the Indian Ocean area. We had no information on this subject and we had at no stage been consulted by the U.S. Government in the matter. When General Maxwell Taylor called on me on 17 December, among other matters mentioned, he told me that they were considering the advisability of some units of their Seventh Fleet cruising these areas with the object of getting acquainted with the Seas in this region, but no decision

had been taken in the matter. Some naval vessels of the Seventh Fleet might be used for such cruises. If the U.S. Government decides to do this, all that we need say, today, is that outside the territorial waters of India, the ocean is, naturally, open to them, as to the naval vessels of any other country.

Nath Pai: Taking note of the statement made by the Prime Minister in the other place, and also by the Foreign Minister of Indonesia, that by itself this move does not compromise in any way the non-alignment policies, may I know what were, according to the assessment of the Government of India, the reasons and motives behind this move, and what are the likely political implications and impact of this move on the politics of South East Asia?

Mr Speaker: That is too wide a question.

Nath Pai: It does arise.

Mr Speaker: In a Calling Attention Notice, the whole political implications and things that might arise subsequently cannot be allowed.

Nath Pai: May I know his assessment, how far, since the 7th Fleet is part of the armed strength of the United States, and it is coming in the Indian Ocean, the Government of India...

Mr Speaker: He might frame a short and straight question which I can allow, but not this.

Nath Pai: May I know, what according to the Government of India's assessment, the motives and reasons behind this are? Is it, as it is claimed, to provide deterrents to the Chinese or is it to emphasize the independence of the U.S. Government of those countries which today are provided with military bases? These are very legitimate question, Sir.

Jawaharlal Nehru: How can I answer this question? That

will be a surmise on my part, what their intentions are. I do not know; that may be the case to some extent. But it would not be proper for me to inform the House of some guess-work of mine on it. But all I can say is that we knew nothing about it. In fact, we first saw it in the newspapers here which reproduced, I think, some message from America, some newspapers there, about this. I think, it is probably just to keep acquainted, as I was told. When General Maxwell Taylor came to see me, he did not mention this. He was with me for half an hour, and as he was going away, he said, "Your newspapers seem to be full of this: it has not been finally decided yet, but it was being considered", as I have said, that some ships, some part of the fleet should come to these waters and perhaps may go to Africa and roam about like this. He did not say anything about its coming to our ports, anyhow in our territorial waters. That was all.

Harish Chandra Mathur (Jalore): May I know if it is the understanding and attitude of the Government of India that any country, whether it is the USA, China or Japan, has free access to the Indian Ocean or the Arabian Sea and can take their warships there, without consulting those countries, and have exercises, without a sort of 'no objections' from our country? Is it not likely to impinge on our policy of nonalignment?

Jawaharlal Nehru: So far as I know, there is no question of any exercise anywhere. Taking our permission....

Vasudevan Nair (Ambalapuzha): Are they coming for sight-seeing?

Harish Chandra Mathur: If there is no consultation, there is an impression created that there is no objection from the Government of India. Does it not create certain conditions or...

Jawaharlal Nehru: I am just saying that. There is no question of their referring the matter to us. It depends on what they are going to do. We do not know yet. An Honorable Member said "sight-seeing". Yes, I say it is sight-seeing, seeing the waters, etc.

Vasudevan Nair: How can the warships come here for sight-seeing?

Renu Chakravarty (Barrackpore): With atomic weapons!

Jawaharlal Nehru: It is just possible to impress the countries round about that they are there. Some justification there may be. The Indian Ocean is a vast area: it spreads right from Africa down the South Pole and to the west up to the Atlantic Ocean. We cannot say nobody can go round all that area.

Renu Chakravarty: It is stated in the papers that it is not one or two occasional ships that will be coming, as has been stated by the Prime Minister, but that it is a task force of the 7th Fleet, with their escort vessels, and that there will be nuclear warheads and aircarriers. I would like to know whether it is not part of the policy of inter-dependence, of military defence, for the whole of South East Asia, and what is the Government's attitude towards it? Is it only that it is a sight-seeing cruise or is it part of the military strategy and the extension of the influence of the United States in waters which are strategically important to us?

Jawaharlal Nehru: I do not know how far that report in the papers about nuclear warheads is correct or not. Maybe, I understand from the statement made by General Taylor, on his going away from India today, that an aircraft carrier, with some destroyers, if they decide so, would probably be coming to the Indian Ocean in a month or two's time. I

suppose the obvious inference is that they are doing this to let it be known that they are there.

Renu Chakravarty: It is quite obvious.

Jawaharlal Nehru: Yes, quite so.

Swell (Assam Autonomous Districts): On 18 April this year, the Defence Minister stated on the floor of the House in response to a Calling Attention Notice that a foreign ship bearing the name *Chung Hsuing* appeared on our Andhra coast and when being challenged by our merchant-ship *Jalapushpa*, sped away along with three auxiliary ships, and we could do nothing to intercept it. He also stated that during the last...

Mr Speaker: What is the question? It should not be too long.

Swell: I am coming to the question. It is also stated that during the last Chinese aggression, we allowed the United States...

Mr Speaker: He is making a speech. I cannot allow it.

Swell: In this context, may I know from the Prime Minister whether he does not consider that the presence of the U.S. 7th Fleet in the Indian Ocean area will not help in containing Chinese military adventurism and expansionism?

Jawaharlal Nehru: I do not see the connection between the two.

Vasudevan Nair: May I know whether the Government thinks that the voyage of the 7th Fleet in the Indian Ocean will only help to increase the tension in the area and cause concern in the minds of the independent countries in the area and if Government think so, may I know whether they are going to convey this feeling of this country to the U.S. Government?

Jawaharlal Nehru: I do not think that any particular

concern need be caused to the countries here. If the Honorable Member takes the countries one by one, most of the countries in South East Asia are more or less allied to the United States Government.

Daji (Indore): The Ceylon Prime Minister has expressed grave concern.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I did not hear what the Honorable Member said. I do not say all, but most of them are and some of them are not. It is possible that some people may feel a little nervous about it.

Warior (Trichur): May I know whether there is any truth in the report that General Taylor offered the new aircraft carrier coming along with the 7th Fleet here in the Indian Ocean as that will be giving sufficient protection to us as an air umbrella and said that all other things in the minds of the Defence Ministry here may be left over, and the Defence Ministry has almost agreed to that proposal?

Jawaharlal Nehru: There has been no offer and no proposal of this kind or of any other kind. He merely referred to this matter. As it has been mentioned in the newspapers here, he had seen it and, therefore, he referred to it. He said, it has not been decided yet finally, but when he left America, he was being told that it was being considered whether a part of the 7th Fleet, that is, as I said, about three or four destroyers and an aircraft carrier will probably come here, tour about, maybe go to Africa and go back. That is all he referred to.

..*Bhagwat Jha Azad* (Bhagalpur): Since the American and British newspapers are featuring almost authoritative news of some sort of the continuing presence of U.S.A.'s 7th Fleet in the Indian Ocean, will Government ask for a clarification from the U.S.A. in this regard?

Jawaharlal Nehru: I do not quite understand. Should I

ask them, according to the Honorable Member, what their future intentions are and whether they intend sending these ships to the Indian Ocean repeatedly? Is that the question?

Bhagwat Jha Azad: All the British and American Press are full of authoritative news that it is not a question of one or two ships coming for some sort of thing, but it is almost the permanent presence of USA's fleet in the Indian Ocean. I want to know whether the Government will ask for any clarification in this regard?

Jawaharlal Nehru: No, Sir, we have not asked. They told us that they were coming just once here. I do not know what they will do in future.

...*Hem Barua*: True it is that the United States' extension of 7th Fleet operations into the Indian Ocean is not dependent on our permission. But may I enquire from our Prime Minister whether this extention, if it is a *fiat accompli*, of course, would not or might not mean an invitation to other powers, particularly antagonistic to us, to do a similar thing, thus jeopardising our security?

Mr Speaker: It is a matter of opinion. It is not any information he is asking for.

Renu Chakravarty: That should be answered.

Mr Speaker: He is asking whether Government does not think like that.

Hem Barua: I want to know from the Prime Minister whether this might not be an invitation to other powers, particularly antagonistic to us, to do a similar thing thus jeopardising our security.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I doubt very much if that would be such an invitation. I doubt very much if there is any other power which is capable of sending a considerable number of ships roundabout here.

Nambiar (Tiruchirapalli): May I know whether it is the

policy of the Government of India not to protest when naval forces of another country decide to cruise in a big way in the vicinity of our territorial waters in the grab of protecting India and itself, several thousands of miles away from its shores, without our asking for such a protection?

Mr Speaker: All these presumptions are not correct.

Jawaharlal Nehru: Several thousand miles away?

Nambiar: From the American shores.

Jawaharlal Nehru: No; it is not the policy of ours at all. We see; if the thing is obviously to our detriment, we protest; if it is not, we do not.

P. C. Boroosh (Sibsagar): May I know whether this can be construed that with a view to contain China, the U.S.A. has taken the opportunity to . . .

Mr Speaker: The Honorable Member also is entitled to construe in any manner he likes.

(*Lok Sabha Debates*, Series 3, V. 24, 19 December 1963, cols. 5667-5775).

REPORTED DECISION OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO SET UP A BASE IN THE INDIAN OCEAV

Calling attention to a matter of Urgent Public Importance

I. K. Gujraî (Delhi): Madam, with your permissiön, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of External Affairs to the reported decision of the British Government to take over the administration of a certain group of islands for setting up a base in the Indian Ocean.

Dinesh Singh (The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of External Affairs): Madam, the British Government have de-

cided to set up a new colony to be known as the British Indian Ocean Territory, to provide defence facilities for the British and United States Governments in the Indian Ocean. Certain islands, at present administered by the Governments of Mauritius and Seychelles, both of which are British colonies, have been taken over to form this new colony. The main islands involved are the Chagos Archipelago, 1,200 miles north east of Mauritius, and another group of small islands near the Seychelles.

According to the British Colonial Secretary, "it is intended that the islands will be available for the construction of defence facilities by the British and United States Governments, but no firm plans have yet been made by either Government. Appropriate compensation will be paid."

While some compensation will be paid to the Governments of Mauritius and Seychelles for taking over these islands, the amount remains to be determind.

It appears that the British Government made these arrangements in view of the grant of independence to Mauritius in 1966.

Government of India's policy in regard to bases in the Indian Ocean has been one of strong opposition.

I. K. Gujral: While the Minister has restated that the Government of India is opposed to the establishment of bases in the Indian Ocean, to me it looks very personal, the way the statement was made, because I think the defence of India is very much affected by the establishment of these bases. May I ask him with your permission, what steps the Government of India have taken, specific steps, to register their protest with the British Government, also to raise the issue in the U.N. and to call a meeting of all the affected countries like Ceylon, Burma and also the East African countries to evolve a joint front.

C. D. Pande (Uttar Pradesh): And also Indonesia.

I. K. Gujral: I am sorry my Honorable friend always gets upset whenever the question of establishment of bases in the Indian Ocean is raised (Interruption). I would not say Indonesia.

The Deputy Chairman: Please finish your question.

Arjun Arora: (Uttar Pradesh): If he is on a good cause, you should agree.

I. K. Gujral: Would the Honorable Minister let us know if any steps—I would like to be told about the specific steps—have been taken to register our protest in the international forum and to call a meeting of the affected countries which would be vitally affected by the establishment of these bases? Some time back I had raised it as an issue, but the Honorable Minister made a statement saying that these were only going to be communication bases. Now, within six months they have become defence bases and in another six months they will become offence bases. May I ask him what steps the Government of India have taken in this direction?

Dinesh Singh: We share the anxiety that has been expressed by the Honorable Member. The House may recollect that this matter was discussed in the Non-aligned Conference that was held in Cairo, where a unanimous resolution was passed condemning the setting up of bases in the Indian Ocean. That is a large enough international forum where this matter had been specifically discussed. A specific resolution had been passed against it. Since then the Government of India, on many occasions, have made their views known as also in this House. The Honorable Member referred to an earlier occasion when he had raised it and we had mentioned about their being communication bases. That was not with any intention of condoning these bases. We had only given the

information that was available to us. We do not welcome the setting up of communication bases and we have not welcomed it. In fact, we had shown our opposition to the setting up of these defence bases.

P. K. Kumaran (Andhra Pradesh): The Honorable Minister stated first that our position is one of strong opposition. Then he said that it was discussed in the Non-aligned Conference. Apart from these he has not stated whether they have communicated to the British Government and informed them clearly that after granting independence to Mauritius there is nothing for them to defend in the Indian Ocean, and that such a military base in the Indian Ocean is entirely out of place. They have nothing to do with the Indian Ocean. May I know whether this position has been made clear to them and whether such a communication has been sent to them?

Dinesh Singh: The British Government is fully aware of our views. But so far as this matter in its present form is concerned, we have just received a communication from the British Government and we shall deal with this matter.

G. Murahari (Uttar Pradesh): I would like to know from the Government whether the Government has consulted the government of Mauritius in this matter and made the position clear to them; also, whether the Government proposes to consult the other countries affected, namely, the East African countries, Ceylon, and other countries which will be affected by this kind of threat from the Anglo-American base, and whether the Government proposes to take up this matter effectively with the British Government now and lodge a protest with them.

Dinesh Singh: I mentioned just now that we had received this communication only a few days ago. We shall certainly take all the measures that are necessary.

A. D. Mani (Madhya Pradesh): May I ask the Minister

not to divulge the contents of the communication that he has received from the British Government, but to tell us broadly whether the British Government have informed us about the nature of the base which they are going to set up in this area? Is it going to be an air base or a nuclear base or is it going to be an anchorage for the British fleet and the Seventh Fleet?

Dinesh Singh: In the statement, I have mentioned what the British Colonial Secretary has said about this base. That is what we know about it so far.

G. Ramachandran (Nominated): I am happy the Minister admits that the matter is a very serious one. He also says that the attitude of the Government of India is one of strong opposition. Now, what are they doing about it? And I wish to ask: Is the Government of India in touch with the Government of Ceylon, with the Government of Burma, and I would even add, with the Government of Pakistan, if that is possible at some future time or as quickly as possible, so that the matter is made an issue and not merely left at the stage of an expression of opinion that we are opposed to it? Secondly, has this matter been raised at all in any of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conferences and, if so, what happened?

Dinesh Singh: So far as the Government of Pakistan is concerned, the Government of Pakistan is already tied up in defence pacts and I do not know whether it would be worthwhile consulting them in this matter when they give base facilities in their own country. So far as the question of consultation with other countries is concerned, I mentioned that this matter was discussed at length in the Non-aligned Conference in which both the countries which the Honorable Member has referred to, were present and there was a unanimous resolution. Since then it has come in its

present position only a few days ago and more action will have to be taken. As I have mentioned, we shall certainly do what is necessary.

The Deputy Chairman: He asked whether you had taken it up in any of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conferences.

Dinesh Singh: I cannot say off-hand that it has been taken up in the Prime Ministers' Conference, but there has been no Prime Ministers' Conference since we received this communication. We have certainly mentioned our views to the present Government in Mauritius.

M. Ruthnaswamy (Madras): May I know if the Government have any information whether the Government of Mauritius have agreed to the setting up of these bases or are they opposed to the setting up of these bases?

Dinesh Singh: At present, as the House is aware, Mauritius is still a British colony. We has discussed this matter with the leaders of Mauritius and they would make known their views to us. Now, we shall certainly discuss this matter with them again.

M. Govinda Reddy (Mysore): In the event of bases being established by foreign powers in the Indian Ocean or a foreign fleet being placed in the Indian Ocean, I would like to know what are our rights. Have we any rights at all?

Dinesh Singh: That is a technical and legal matter. I cannot say off-hand, Madam, but I might mention one particular thing in this connection that Mauritius and all these islands are British colonies. To that effect they can have their base in that way. The whole thing arises when Mauritus becomes independent and Britain retains these islands. There are certain U.N. resolutions on this subject also that when independence is granted, the territory should not be broken up. We are aware of all these matters and we shall

certainly take it up.

D. Thengari (Uttar Pradesh): Have the people of Mauritius, as distinct from the Government of Mauritius, expressed their reaction on this matter?

Dinesh Singh: I cannot say off-hand what has happened in Mauritius on this matter.

Akbar Ali Khan (Andhra Pradesh): After they have decided to change the communication base into a defence base, have we consulted the countries of Ceylon, Burma and others?

The Deputy Chairman: That question has been put before.

Akbar Ali Khan: Madam, what I am asking is this. After this change of position from communication base to defence base, have we consulted these countries?

Dinesh Singh: Both bases are equally bad. I mentioned this a little earlier. We have got to discuss this again. Whether it is a communication base or defence base, there is not much difference in modern terms in these things.

Chandra Shekhar (Uttar Pradesh): The distinguished Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs has said that he has just received a communication about this defence base, and since then no Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference has been held. But he received the communication about the communication centre long before, and after that a Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference was held. I want to know whether in that Prime Ministers' Conference this matter was discussed. Another point. What are our expectations? As the interests of the Commonwealth countries are involved, may I know whether we expect from the United Kingdom Government that they should consult us before taking such steps in establishing defence centres or defence establishment? If not, was any

protest made to the United Kingdom Government?

Dinesh Singh: I do not think it is obligatory on the part of the British government to discuss these matters in the Commonwealth Conference as to where they should set up bases. This is largely dictated by their military requirements and commitments. So far as this matter is concerned, it is a matter that concerns not only the Commonwealth countries but many other countries, and therefore we shall have to discuss it with the British Government directly, and the other countries will no doubt take it up with the British Government.

...*M. M. Dharia* (Maharashtra): May we know when the Government of India first came to know regarding the setting up of the bases by the British Government, and from that date onwards what efforts have been made by our Government to take into confidence the neighbouring countries concerned and also to lodge our protest with the British Government?

Dinesh Singh: We received this communication only a few days ago.

I. K. Gujral: Is the Minister in a position to categorically assure this House that we think that the establishment of these bases in the Indian Ocean is an unfriendly act to this country and that we will do everything to resist it?

Dinesh Singh: We shall certainly do everything to resist it.

(*Rajya Sabha Debates*, V. 54, Part I, 18 November 1965, cols. 1815-22).

ALLEGED PROPOSAL FOR PURCHASE OF I. LANDS IN INDIAN OCEAN BY U.K. FOR MILITARY BASES

Calling Attention to Matter of Urgent Public Importance

M. C. Chagla (The Minister of External Affairs): Sir, this subject was discussed in the Rajya Sabha on 18 November and in the Lok Sabha on 23 November 1965. The Deputy Minister made a statement in the Rajya Sabha while the then Foreign Minister made a statement in the Lok Sabha. We stand by the attitude taken by the Government of India on this question in those statements.

With reference to recent reports on this question, Government have made further enquiries. According to the British what is being done now is nothing more than what was contemplated before. According to them, there is no idea of setting up military bases or stationing of foreign troops on these islands. They claim that the present proposal is no different from their previous proposal and the idea is to give only transit, staging and refuelling facilities to British and American military planes going to the Far East. They further claim that this is necessary in view of British commitments to Malaysia, Australia and Hong Kong, and American commitments in the Far East. What the British Government are proposing to do now is to negotiate the purchase of three privately owned islands, viz., Farquhar, Desroches and Aldabra in the Seychelles group and the Chagos Archipelago which belonged to Mauritius, for the provision of transit and refuelling-cum-communication facilities.

Government of India's position has been made clear in the past and there is no change in our stand. We have subscribed to the Bandung Declaration of 1955. We have also signed the Cairo Declaration of 1964 on the subject

of establishment of bases in the Indian Ocean and we stand by them.

We have also subscribed to resolution No. 1514 of 14th December 1960, and No. 2066 of 4 January 1966, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly dealing with this subject. Resolution No. 2066 "notes with deep concern that any step by the administering power to detach certain islands from the territory of Mauritius for the purpose of establishment of military bases would be in contravention of resolution No. 1514". It further "invites the administering power to take no action which would dismember the territory of Mauritius and violate its territorial integrity."

We are opposed to the establishment of military bases in the Indian Ocean area as it might lead to an increase in tensions in this region. We hope that, in the larger interest of peace, the British authorities will bear in mind our feelings and the feelings of other countries in this region and desist from setting up any military bases in this area.

...*M. C. Chagla*: Yes, Sir, apart from making inquiries, we have made representations...

George Fernandes: Not representations, protests.

M. C. Chagla: Representations which amount to protests.

Vasudevan Nair: What does that mean?

M. C. Chagla: That means, we have pointed out to the High Commissioner for the United Kingdoms in Delhi, that what they are trying to do is opposed to the United Nations resolutions. The explanation given by the High Commissioner is what we have stated, namely, that their intention is not to set up any base. Even so, we pointed out that it was opposed to the United Nations resolution because the resolution comes to this. If a country is independent, it can do what it likes with any part of its territory—it can dismember itself; it can transfer its sovereignty

or a part of it to other countries—but when a country is not independent, to dismember that country is against our stand for anti-colonialism. Today Mauritius is still not independent. Seychelles is still a British colony. Therefore, any attempt on the part of the British Government to dismember either Mauritius territory or the Seychelles islands would really amount to a violation of the United Nations resolution. We have pointed this out in unmistakable terms to the High Commissioner here and I am sure he will convey our views to his Government.

...*M. C. Chagla*: Certainly, we will take up this matter in the United Nations because it is the violation of the Resolution and we will do what we can to mobilise public opinion against what is happening.

...*R. Barua*: (Jorhat): Recently, there was a Defence Seminar in which 18 experts from European countries participated. May I know whether the counterparts of India used this opportunity to project our feelings in regard to the security risks that the Asian countries may have as a result of this new transit base?

M. C. Chagla: I am sorry I am not in a position to say whether this specific question was discussed at this Seminar.

Chintamani Panigrahi (Bhubaneshwar). May I know whether the Government of India proposes to launch a joint protest against this move of the British Government with all the Asian powers concerned? The Minister said that they are not purchasing the islands for the purpose of having a foreign base. Are they purchasing these islands for cultivation then?

M. C. Chagla: As I told the House, they claim that the idea is to give only transit, staging, and refuelling facilities. They have categorically told us that they do not intend to use them as military bases.

Chintamani Panigrahi: Is there any joint protest by Burma and other countries and, if so, is our Government joining in that protest.

M. C. Chagla: At present, we do not know it because this has just come to light. We have taken action and, if necessary, we will work together with other countries which are interested in the Indian Ocean.

...*M. C. Chagla*: With regard to the independence of Mauritius, the position is this. The British Government have agreed that independence would be granted six months after the elections are held. The date of election has been postponed from time to time. But as far as I know election is going to be held this year some time in June or July, and six months after that, the United Kingdom is committed to grant independence to Mauritius. As regards the Seychelles, it is still a colony of the United Kingdom, and no further progress has been made.

With regard to the latter part of my Honourable friend's question, we shall certainly try to mobilise public opinion of like-minded countries to see that these islands do not in any way prejudice the security of the countries bordering on the Indian Ocean or even lead to friction or tension in the Indian Ocean which we do not want.

P. K. Deo (Kalahandi): In view of the continued Chinese atomic blackmail against India and in view of the fact that no progress is being made in the Disarmament Committee regarding non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, especially so far as the mutual obligations between the nuclear and non-nuclear countries are concerned, and in view of our stand that we are not going in for the manufacture of nuclear weapons, is it not proper that the Government of India and the Governments of the United Kingdom and Mauritius sit together and try to find out a common atomic

shield against this country whose security is being constantly threatened by the Chinese blackmail?

M. C. Chagla: This is a question regarding policy. I have already placed before the House a statement on our nuclear policy. I do not think that I can usefully add anything more to what our policy is with regard to proliferation of nuclear weapons.

P. K. Deo: All the three could sit together and try to find out a common defence arrangement.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Minister has already said that he cannot add to what he has already stated.

M. C. Chagla: We shall take all steps to see that our security is safeguarded against China. This is a suggestion for action and we shall certainly consider it.

M. R. Masani (Rajkot): Thank you.

Swell (Autonomous Districts): In his book, *Gandhiji's Emissary*, the late Sudhir Ghosh reiterated what he had stated on the floor of the other House, namely, that during the most agonising phase of the Chinese aggression on our territory, the late Prime Minister Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, wrote to President Kennedy and requested for 16 squadrons of fighter bombers. As far as I know, Government have not denied this assertion of the late Sudhir Ghosh. In view of this, what we were led to do during the mortal hour of our nation, in view of the growing detente between the USA and Russia, and in view of the continuing aggressiveness of China which now possesses nuclear weaponry, I would like to know what good it does to our national interests to raise this hullabaloo about these bases in the high oceans about which we cannot do anything in any case, and whether it would not serve our interests better to keep silent about it and get the assurance of protection of our country against nuclear blackmail by China.

Mr. Speaker: Shri P. K. Deo also asked the same question. The Minister has replied it.

Vasudevan Nair: An irrelevant question.

M. R. Masani: A relevant question.

M. C. Chagla: India has not been in the habit in the past, it is not in the habit now and it will, I hope, never be in the habit in future, of not raising its protests when injustice is done or something is done which is opposed to our policy. Our policy is the policy of non-alignment; our policy has been the policy of anti-colonialism. What is being done today affects our policy of anti-colonialism. This, according to us, is a perpetuation of colonialism. Since the days of Bandung, we have subscribed to certain principles. We must stand by them and if somebody violates those principles, it is the bounden duty of India to raise a protest.

Swell: My question is not about the policy. I asked: what good does it do to the national interest to raise this protest? He has evaded that question.

Mr. Speaker: Exactly, the same question was asked by Shri Deo. The Minister has given the same answer.

Vasudevan Nair: The Honourable Minister has just conveyed some information that he received from the British Government. As far as the nature of the military bases they wish to establish in these islands is concerned, I should like to know whether he has some independent information about the type of military bases they are going to establish in these islands, and if so, what is that?

Mr Speaker: I think he explained in answer to the first question itself. Anyway, he may repeat.

M. C. Chagla: Our information so far is no different from what has been conveyed to us by the High Commission here, that they propose to use these islands for the purpose of transit facilities. They are giving a categorical assu-

rance that they do not want to convert these islands into military bases.

Indrajit Gupta: The statement refers to British commitments in Malaysia, Australia and Hong Kong and American commitments in the Far East. I think this is only a polite way of saying SEATO commitments. May I know from the Honourable Minister whether, in the course of these diplomatic exchanges with the High Commissioner of the United Kingdom, it was pointed out by our side that if transit, staging, and refuelling facilities to planes are to be given on these islands, it will obviously necessitate the setting up of air fields, because servicing facilities cannot be given without air fields being constructed? Was it pointed out that once these air fields are constructed, they can at any time be utilized as full-fledged air bases? Also, did they ask how it is that, apart from violating the United Nations resolutions, this matter was never communicated or discussed with that happy family known as the Commonwealth of Nations, of which we are such an enthusiastic member?

M. C. Chagla: We have pointed out that even the uses to which they want to put these islands would violate and infringe the resolution of the United Nations. The British Government did communicate to us their decision as a member of the Commonwealth and as soon as the decision was communicated to us, we protested: we said that even these limited facilities might lead to something more, and even as it is, it constitutes a violation. They have no right, we have pointed out to them, to purchase islands and try to dismember Mauritius and Seychelles which are still not independent countries.

Indrajit Gupta: I asked a specific question. He can say yes or no. Was it pointed out that providing these facilities to the United Kingdom and United States planes would

require construction of military air fields, which can be employed as air bases at any time. Was this pointed out? What reply did they give?

M. C. Chagla: I do not know whether this specific thing was pointed out, but we did point out that it may ultimately lead to something more.

Hem Barua (Mangaladai): The area in which the three islands exist that U.K. proposes to purchase, is known as the British Indian Ocean Territory. That is an anachronism, and that shows how the Indian Ocean has been dismembered. Whatever that might be, may I know, except raising this issue of the purchase of these islands in the United Nations Organisation platform, what else our Government can do? We raise this in the United Nations because it threatens peace. Besides that, what can the Government do, because it is their own territory, Britain's own territory, and they are purchasing these islands from their own people.

M. C. Chagla: I wish my Honourable friend will tell me what we can do. I agree we can raise it in the United Nations.

Hem Barua: He is bringing this to the United Nations where there will be endless talk only, and nothing fruitful will emerge out of it. The United Nations is a platform for endless talks, and the Honourable Minister has become a specialist now in evasive answers.

S. M. Bannerjee (Kanpur): After these bases are established and we have taken note of it, I want to know whether any correspondence has been addressed to them by the Government of U.K.?

M. C. Chagla: Yes, Sir. We have received a note, I said so, telling us that they are purchasing these islands and they have told us the purpose for which they are purchasing.

Tarkeshwari Sinha (Barh): Is this kind of agreement to

allow the free hold of these islands to the British Government, on the plea that these settlements were made before India achieved full sovereignty, compatible with the position of India and Indian interests? If it conflicts with the national interests of India, is there any via media by which it can be resolved?

M. C. Chagla: I think the Honourable Member is under some misapprehension. This proposal to purchase these islands was entered into after India became independent. The position is that Mauritius and Seychelles are not independent. We are independent, and our attitude is that unless a country is independent and deliberately wants to dismember itself, it should not be done. If we want to give a part of our country to somebody, it is our business. Our attitude is that Mauritius is not independent, Seychelles is not independent; it cannot exercise a right—which it does not possess—of dismembering itself. That is why we are objecting and we are saying you cannot purchase these islands.

M. C. Chagla: Well, Sir, we will certainly press upon the U.N. to take strong action. U.K. is a member of the U.N. and I am sure that the U.K. will listen to any directive given by the U.N. According to the note, already agreement has been entered into and compensation has been fixed. One is already held as freehold by the Crown; with regard to two they are still negotiating. We will send the necessary note to the U.N. and point this out and if something can be done we will do it.

(*Lok Sabha Debates*, 4th Series, V. 2, 6 April 1967; cols. 3207-3223).

FRENCH ATTEMPT TO BREAK INTO INDIAN OCEAN
(Oral Answer to Question)

Chengalraya Naidu: *Will* the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state (*a*) whether it is a fact that France is trying to break into the Indian Ocean; (*b*) whether it is also a fact that the French High Command had decided to deploy two nuclear submarines in and around the Bay of Bengal in the Indian Ocean; and (*c*) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

Surendra Pal Singh (Deputy Minister, Ministry of External Affairs): (*a*) and (*b*), Government have no information in the matter; (*c*) does not arise.

Changalraya Naidu: If the Ministers have no information, at least the departmental people in the Secretariat must go through the papers and find out what is going on in other areas. If they do not know what is going on, how can they function as Ministers? France has already sent two nuclear submarines to the Indian Ocean and they are also negotiating with South Africa to have a naval base at Simonstown near Capetown where they can station naval vessels. The French Government is having negotiations with South Africa to have their headquarters there. Will the Minister take pains to know what is going on in the world and find out whether what I have said is a fact? If so, will he take necessary steps to protect our coast, because the French Government are going to send their submarines to operate in the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean.

Surendra Pal Singh: We do try to keep in touch with developments in the world, but sometime a thing may happen somewhere which may not come to our notice. As far as our knowledge goes, no French submarines have come into this area so far. Probably the Honourable Member has asked the question on the basis of a newspaper report which

emanated from Johannesburg sometime back that some secret negotiations were going on between the French and South African Governments. But these are merely speculative reports appearing in the press; they are not authentic news. Nor has it been confirmed by the French Government. We cannot say very much about it.

Chengalraya Naidu: Not only are French submarines operating in the Indian Ocean, but Russian submarines with a naval squadron are also operating in the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea. The Defence Ministry has refused to comment on it. Already, twice, Russian fleet has come into our waters. They had asked our Government to give them naval facilities. This time the Russian naval fleet has come into our Indian waters and they are operating in the Indian Ocean without informing our Government or taking our permission. May I know whether the Government has received any request from the Russian naval fleet about their operating in our Indian Ocean? If not, will the Government find out whether the fleet is there and will they strongly protest to the Russian Government?

Dinesh Singh (Minister of External Affairs): May I request the Honourable Member to kindly bear in mind that the Indian Ocean is not our ocean. There is no such thing as the Indian Ocean belonging to India. He has been talking of our ocean.

Chengalraya Naidu: I said the fleet has come into our territorial waters. That is what I meant.

Dinesh Singh: That is a different matter. Let us look at it from the point of view of the international laws. We are functioning under certain international conventions and laws. We cannot arrogate to ourselves the responsibility of the total ownership of the Indian Ocean or the Arabian Sea. We are concerned with the territorial waters of India and we can

say that we take effective measures to safeguard our territorial waters and that we are not aware of the operation of any foreign submarines in our territorial waters. Then, whether the Soviet fleet comes to the Indian Ocean or other fleets come to the Indian Ocean, if they conform to the international law of the high seas there is hardly any objection that we can take except to say that we would like this area to be kept free of conflict, to be kept free of nuclear weapons.

Balraj Madhok: The Honorable Minister just now said that the Indian Ocean does not belong to India alone. Agreed, it does not belong to India. But India occupies a special position in regard to this ocean and he cannot deny it; and whether the government accepts the concept of a power vacuum or not, it has been accepted all over the world and all through history. Indian Ocean occupies an important place and a power vacuum has been created there because Britain has withdrawn from there and U.S.A. has withdrawn from there. Therefore, here is an open sea which is sought to be controlled by China, Russia, France and other countries. In view of these circumstances, if India alone cannot see that the Indian Ocean does not become the hunting ground of foreign adventures, may I know whether it will take steps to have some kind of understanding with other countries of the Indian Ocean like Indonesia and Australia, so that the Indian Ocean remains safe from these foreign adventurers and the security and safety of India and also other countries bordering the Indian Ocean is not jeopardised?

Dinesh Singh: Within the limitations of our resources, we shall certainly take every possible step to safeguard our interests in the Indian Ocean. The second question which the Honourable Member referred to is some kind of defence cooperation with other countries. We are not contemplating that.

Balraj Madhok: I said "understanding". Without any defence pact you can have that understanding; can't you have that? Let him reply.

Ranga: We should seek the cooperation of other countries which are directly interested in the Indian Ocean.

Dinesh Singh: I said that we have not had any defence arrangements with any other country. We are not contemplating defence arrangements for the Indian Ocean.

Sushila Rohtagi: Because of the power vacuum created in the Indian Ocean, because of the strategic importance of this area and because these ships do not happen to be entirely small ships but, as the Honorable Member who asked the question stated, they happen to be nuclear submarines, may I ask the government if it is strictly vigilant in that particular area because of its strategic nature? Has it made any enquiries whether they are small ordinary ships or ships carrying nuclear weapons?

Dinesh Singh: I cannot understand this. How are we to make these enquiries? What would the Honorable Lady Member expect me to do in this case? The navies of other countries do not come with our permission or after informing us. But we take effective steps, according to our resources, to see and find out what ships come there.

Ranga: That is not enough.

Dinesh Singh: But other countries do not necessarily inform us before their navies come to our sea. I have not been able to understand one point. Much has been said about the withdrawal of the British Navy. Apparently, according to them if the British Navy is there, everything is all right. Because of the withdrawal of the British Navy, all these things have come. (Interruptions). So far as the question of no other navy being able to come there is concerned, we can only function under the international arrangement that is

existing for navigation on high seas. We shall function according to it. But, so far as the area is concerned, we have said on a number of occasions that this area should be an area of peace, it should not be disturbed and that it should be kept free from nuclear weapons.

Sushila Rohatgi: The point which I raised in my question has not been answered. My suggestion was precisely for carrying out the intentions which were laid down by the Honorable Minister just now, namely, that this area should not be disturbed. I would like to know whether any action has been taken by the government to see that this area is not disturbed by allowing or deploying nuclear submarines.

Dinesh Singh: What are we expected to do in that matter? We have to respect the laws of navigation on the high seas.

P. Gopalan: Despite a mild and formal protest made by the Government of India earlier it seems that the United States has decided to go on with the establishment of a naval and missile base in and around the Seychelles Islands in the Indian Ocean. This poses a very serious threat to the security of our country. May I ask the Minister whether the Government considers this as a threat to the security of our country, and whether it is true that there is an understanding between the Government of India and the Government of United States, despite the protest made by the Government of India, to set up a base in the Indian Ocean in the name of protecting our country from the so-called menace of China.

Dinesh Singh: We are against the setting up of any foreign bases in this area. This has been declared by us on a number of occasions. We are informed by the United Kingdom Government and the United States Government that they are thinking of setting up a staging post and also a communi-

cations set-up there.

P. Gopalan: How have you checked it up?

Dinesh Singh: In any case we are not in favour of any bases in this area.

Bedabrata Barua: It has been stated more than once in this House that the Government is not a believer in the power vacuum theory in the high seas, that is, the Indian Ocean; at the same time, reports have been emanating that in view of the British withdrawal, both the Soviet and the U.S. presence might have increased in the Indian Ocean. What is the Government's report in regard to that, whether that presence has increased, and what is the Government's reaction thereto? In addition to merely saying that we cannot do anything about the Indian Ocean, certainly we might try to do something through diplomatic channels and otherwise, and see that the Indian Ocean is converted into an area of peace.

Hem Barua: Is it a fact that Indonesia has suggested that the Indian Ocean should be known as the Indonesian Ocean and, if so, what is the reaction of the Government thereto, and may I know whether it is a fact that the Soviet Union has already sent two thermo-nuclear submarines which are criusing in the Indian Ocean at present and if so, what action do Government propose to take, whether they propose to have a discussion with the Soviet Union to see that the Indian Ocean—up till now it is known as the Indian Ocean—is free from any political disturbances?

Dinesh Singh: The story of the Indonesian Ocean is an old one. It is no longer current. So far as the question of. . .

Surendranath Dwivedy: You mean to say it is given up?

Hem Barua: That demand may be an old one. You cannot reject the old people right away because they are old.

You don't reject a demand because it is an old one.

Dinesh Singh: So far as the question of approaching Soviet submarines is concerned, we are not aware of any Soviet nuclear submarines approaching. Our position is known to the Soviet Union. We want to keep this area free of nuclear weapons. This is very well known.

Swell: Sir, it seems it has become the habit of many of our Ministers to say that they have no information in answer to many questions. Whatever happens in and around us in the Indian Ocean is of the greatest importance to us. If they have no information of what is going on there, I think, they do not have the right to sit where they are sitting.

Mr Speaker: Come to the question now.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee: But the question is: will they oblige?

Swell: I am putting the question very seriously and carefully. I would like the Minister to give me a careful and serious answer.

It is a fact that consequent on the British decision to withdraw its military base from Singapore and on the probability of American withdrawal from Vietnam, there is a scramble among many powers to register their presence in the Indian Ocean and to carve out their spheres of influence there. As you said just now, you have been repeating that our method of meeting the consequent vacuum in the Indian Ocean is to increase the economic strength of the littoral countries. I would like to know whether the Minister's attention has been drawn to the statement of the Australian Prime Minister, Mr. Gorton, justifying the presence of Australian troops in Singapore and Malaysia precisely on the ground to increase and safeguard the economic life of the littoral countries against externally promoted aggression and, if so, what is the attitude of this Government to this action

of one of the littoral countries?

Dinesh Singh: We are not in favour of any kind of military pact in that sense. The question that the Honorable Member has raised is a general question that I wish he would put during the general debate where I would have a longer time to give a longer explanation. During the Question Hour, I can only say a few words. I can say this much that so far as the question of the Indian Ocean is concerned, it is not necessarily linked with British withdrawal—perhaps, that may be one factor—but the growing influence of other countries is felt in different parts of the world, whether there are other countries present there or not present there. Therefore, for us, what is of the greatest importance is to increase our own defence capabilities to protect ourselves ..(*Lok Sabha Debates*, 4th Series, V. 26, 18-31 March 1969, cols. 1.10, 19 March).

PURCHASE OF ISLANDS IN INDIAN OCEAN BY BRITISH GOVERNMENT

Mr Speaker: Now, we shall take up the half-an-hour discussion.

C.K. Chakrapani (Ponnani): This subject has been raised on the floor of the House several times in the past, but the replies given by Government have been consistently vague and indefinite.

As one Honourable Member noted earlier, Britain was purchasing these islands not for cultivation but for establishing a foreign base. It is not a base of an ordinary type. This fact was admitted by the former Foreign Minister on the floor of the House on 23 November 1965. He said: "So far as its strategic position is concerned, of course, it occu-

pies a very strategic place."

Sir, he even admitted then that these were going to be defence bases.

What is surprising is the vague and callous attitude of the Government towards this problem. When on 22 May, a question was raised in the House whether the Government of India at any stage were consulted by the U.K. Government on the purchase of these islands, the reply given by Government was simply astounding. It was: "I do not know whether actually the Government of India was informed, to start with. When we came to know about it through newspaper reports and when we got in touch with the U.K. Government, they informed us that they had this intention of purchasing them."

I do not think that Government have ever seriously considered the military implications of this issue.

The Foreign Minister even went to the extent of taking a servile position about the British base. He said on 6 April, "All that we can do, for the time being, is to accept their statements that they do not propose to use these islands as military base." Here, the Honourable Minister simply echoes the British version. Government do not feel it necessary to have their own investigation, independent of the British Government. Whatever the U.K. Government may say, these bases will be used as military bases. Can the Foreign Minister point out a single U.S. or British base which does not have any military significance? The U.S.A. has bases in Hawaii, Okinawa and Gaum Islands in the Pacific Ocean. But everybody knows that they are full fledged military bases, and we are seeing every day what a nefarious role they are playing against the Vietnamese people. The U.K.-U.S. joint base in the Indian Ocean will also play a similar role in Asia and Africa.

As the Foreign Minister himself noted that the claim of the British Government was that this was necessary in view of the British commitments to Malaysia, Australia and Hong Kong and American commitments in the Far East, I would like to know what the commitments of Britain and America in this area are. It is just to dominate the economies of the Far East and Africa. Economic pressure, political blackmail and military subversion are the weapons freely used by the British and Americans to perpetuate their colonial and neo-colonial hold on these areas. Are we expected to support this in any way? Definitely not.

Government say that they are against foreign military base in the Indian Ocean. At the same time they accept the British Government's version that it is not a military base.

What is most serious is the Government's attitude towards the East of Suez policy of the British Government.

Here I wish to quote some portions from the British Government's *White Paper*. It said:

> We shall continue to honour our commitments to our allies and to play our proper part in defending the interests of the free world. It is in the Far East and Southern Asia that the greatest danger to peace may lie in the next decade. Some of our partners in the Commonwealth may be directly threatened. We believe it is right that Britain should continue to maintain a military presence in this area.

In the same document, it was announced that by 1968 when the South Arabian Federation should become independent, Britain should withdraw from the Aden base. The Government should have taken note of this position of Britain. The British imperialists themselves admit the need

for a strong military presence in the Indian Ocean to continue the age long loot of the Afro-Asian continent. But the External Affairs Minister has given them a certificate of clean behaviour. What else can a servile Government do under the pressure of billions of dollars and sterling?

The Deputy Minister admitted that the Government of India were not even informed of this intention of the British Government. Why should the British government consult a Government which has completely lost its self-respect, national pride and honour?

On 6 April, the Minister said: "We shall certainly try to mobilize public opinion of like-minded countries to see that these islands do not in any way prejudice the security of the countries bordering on the Indian Ocean." Two months have passed since then and we do not know whether the Government have moved even an inch in that direction.

It is not sufficient to take this question to the U.N. While this question will be under discussion in the U.N., the U.S.-U.K. combine will continue their military build-up in the Indian Ocean threatening the sovereignty of the whole continent.

Even now the time is not lost. If the Government are really serious, they can mobilize the Afro-Asian countries against this sinister move of Britain. India can give a lead to all these countries against this dangerous move of Britain. It will enhance our prestige. It will regain our lost prestige among Afro-Asian countries. I want to know whether Government are prepared to do that.

A shining example of Arab unity against the U.S.-U.K. machinations in West Asia is just before our eyes. Can we not take lessons from this? Let the Government raise their strong voice in cooperation with the anti-imperialist Afro-

Asian countries and make a firm declaration that the Afro-Asian countries will never tolerate the deeds of imperialist aggression in the Indian Ocean. I wish the Minister to come out with such a categorical statement.

The situation is very serious. Obviously this dangerous development has a direct and immediate bearing on our country. It poses a serious threat to our national independence and sovereignty. If despite this, the U.K. Government persists in their nefarious game, we should quit the Commonwealth in protest against their imperialist action. May I know whether Government are prepared to do that? This is the question. Mildly speaking, this action alone will satisfy the people of India who stand for international peace and security.

P. Gopalan: South Asia is going to be made an arena of war, if the British and American imperialists are allowed to purchase the Indian Ocean islands. It is a direct threat to the sovereignty and independence of our country, but I doubt whether it is not the result of a conspiracy between the American, British and the Indian Governments, that the Indian Government is merely making a mild protest and has allowed the Britishers to purchase the islands, and thereby they are participating in the American policy of the containment of China. This is the real aim behind the purchase of these islands. The British Defence Department has made it very clear that they are going to make this a base when they are forced to withdraw from Iran and Singapore.

In this connection, I would like to have a clarification from our External Affairs Minister whether it is not a direct threat to the sovereignty and independence of our country

Hanumanthaiya: No.

P. Gopalan: If it is, may I know whether the External

Affairs Minister will come forward with a categorical statement that if the Britishers proceed with their aim of purchasing and setting up their base in these islands, the Government of India will withdraw from the Commonwealth. That is what is expected of a self-respecting country and I hope the External Affairs Minister will do this solemn duty.

E. K. Nayanar (Palghat): On 6 April, the Minister of External Affairs replying to a question in the Lok Sabha said that the Government had sent a representation which amounts to a protest to Britain against its purchasing some islands in the Indian Ocean and to provide transit and refuelling-cum-communication facilities to the British and American military planes to the Far East.

May I know if these facilities would not necessitate the construction of military air fields which could be used as a military base? Since the islands in the Indian Ocean have already been bought by the British, may I know what was the result of India's protest to Britain?

There are also alarming press reports about these Indian Ocean islands. The British and U.S. bases have thus appeared on archiepelagoes in the Indian Ocean. In the island of Chagos, U.S. and British nuclear bases and a big naval communications centre are being created. In the Maladive and Cocos islands, anchorages are being sought for naval forces, and landing and take-off strips are being modernised. A new chain of bases is being set up, spearheaded simultaneously against Asia and Africa.

On the Carribean Islands and Guiana are also constructed numerous British, French and Dutch military installations. In the light of these reports from London and Washington, there is no question of setting up of communication centres in the Indian Ocean. What are being

set up are military bases for F-111 bombers jointly by the U.K. and U.S. It is common knowledge that F-111 bombers do not possess the range directly to bomb China. They can only be used against South Asia or East Africa. May I know if the Government of India will wake up?

May I know what steps are taken against the British attitude?

M.C. Chagla (Minister of External Affairs): I do not think there is any ambiguity whatsoever with regard to India's policy with regard to these islands. My statement on the last occasion is perfectly clear and unambiguous. May I repeat the position?

We were informed in 1965 by the United Kingdom that they were proposing to buy these islands. At that time we protested and we said that it was contrary to the UN resolutions. Since, then, what has happened is this. The U.K. Government has made an *ex-gratia* payment of £3 million to Mauritius for acquiring certain islands belonging to Mauritius and they have paid a sum £1 million to Seychelles islands for acquiring certain islands belonging to the Seychelles. They have given us a categoric assurance that these islands will not be used as military bases.

Nambiar: What is the guarantee? Who will be able to check them? Have you got authority to check this up?

M. C. Chagla: They are meant merely for transit staging facilities. They have pointed out to us that they have the responsibility of defence arrangements with Australia, Malaysia and Hong Kong. In order to discharge that responsibility, they need these islands.

The next thing that happened is this. There is an agreement between the United States and Great Britain which was entered into on 13 December 1966 by exchange of notes, concerning the availability for defence purposes of these islands, namely Diego Garcia and Chagos, which form

part of the British Indian Ocean Territories. Only recently, Mr. Healey, the Defence Minister, made an announcement in the House of Commons in response to a question in the British Parliament. Recently, about the proposal to develop the Indian Ocean atoll at Al Dabra for defence purposes, Mr. Healey, Secretary of State, said that no decision had yet been taken by the Government on whether any defence facilities were to be established at this place. He said: "The matter is under serious consideration and I would expect a decision to be taken within 12 months from now."

Therefore, it is clear that this was not intended for a military base. My Honorable friend suggested as if we were in collusion with the U.K. and the U.S.A. It is a ridiculous suggestion, if I may say so with respect. Whatever facilities are set up in these islands are in order to protect Malaysia, Hong Kong and Australia with whom the United Kingdom has got defence agreements.

Our objection in this matter is this. There is a UN resolution to which we are a party that no colony should be dismembered. An independent sovereign country can do whatever it likes with its territory. But when a country is not sovereign it should not be dismembered. What is attempted to be done is to buy a part of Mauritius which is not independent and also to buy a part of Seychelles which is a colony, and therefore, this goes counter to the UN resolution. We have pointed out to the United Kingdom Government on more than one occasion that this is opposed to the UN resolution to which we are a party and we cannot agree to what they are doing. We object to their purchasing these islands till independence has been given to these countries. These countries may, after independence, on their own volition decide to part with these islands; you may buy a freehold or leasehold but you cannot buy sove-

reign rights of a country when that country is not in a position to decide whether it is prepared to part with the sovereignty over a part of its own territory. This is our position. This is how the matter stands.

Nambiar: Will it not upset the balance of power in the Indian Ocean area? Is it not harmful to our defence if a great power has a military base in an island which is so near to us? Is it not in the interest of our national defence that we should point it out, apart from the United Nations decision of the charter?

M.C. Chagla: Will my Honourable friend realize that the United Kingdom has a defence agreement with Australia and Malaysia and with Hong Kong, and these islands are necessary for her transit and staging facilities and so they are carrying out arrangements for that purpose. They are not establishing military bases; they have given us a solemn assurance that there is no intention whatever on the part of the United Kingdom to establish military bases.

(*Lok Sabha Debates*, Series, 4, V. 3, 22 June 1967, Cols. 3040-3049).

FOREIGN MINISTER'S SPEECH ON THE INDIAN APPROACH TO ASIAN SECURITY

The main effort that we have made during the year is in Asia. We have attached very great importance to the strengthening of our relations with Asian countries. India, situated as it is in a strategic centre, the southern part of Asia, it is only natural that we would wish to have friends both on the western side as well as on the eastern and northern sides of Asia.

Mr Piloo Mody was rather distressed; he said that we had

accepted the Soviet Union as an Asian power. He may be able to stand and block part of a map but I cannot change the geography of the world. When more than two-thirds of the Soviet Union is situated in Asia, can we say in all sincerity that the Soviet Union is not in Asia? If the capital is in Europe, that does not mean that large parts of the territory and the citizens of the Soviet Union are not Asians or that they have nothing to do with Asia. But Mr Piloo Mody sees red as soon as anything concerning Soviet Union is presented and that is something which I cannot help. He has himself to re-orient his thinking to bring it in line with what is happening in the world today.

In this respect, a number of references were made by some Honourable Members about the need for us to pay attention to our neighbours, that we have neglected them and that we have not paid sufficient attention to them. Sir, I would like, with your permission, to read out a brief quotation from what Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said in the Constituent Assembly as early as March 1949. He said:

> Asia today is primarily concerned with what may be called the immediate human problems. In each country of Asia, these main problems are the problem of food, of clothing, of education and of economic help. We are concerned with these problems. We are not directly concerned with the problems of power politics. The countries of Asia may have quarrels with each other here and there. But there is no basic legacy of conflict such as the countries of Europe possess.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru felt that India can only play a big part and an effective part in helping to avoid war in Asia. It was his hope that Asia would succeed in safeguarding itself from the sources that seek to inject war into our

part of the world. I cannot say that we have wholly succeeded in keeping war out of the Asian land. In fact, we have not succeeded in ending war in Asia...

M. L. Sondhi (New Delhi): Are these world of Mr. Nehru or of Mr. Dinesh Singh? Is this a part of the quotation or does the quotation end there?

Dinesh Singh: If it leaves any measure of doubt whether these are words from Panditji or from me, personally, it will be a very great honour for me.

Sir, we have not been able to prevent war. But we are trying to build peace which will keep wars out. We are trying to build in this area the bonds that united us, the links that were destroyed by hundreds of years of colonialism, which had carved out Asia to be linked with their own economy to feed their own people. We have now to make efforts again to re-establish these bonds between the Asian countries.

It has been our feeling that this can best be done by estabilishing close economic cooperation between the Asian countries. Our concept of cooperation between the Asian countries is not limited to expansion of trade, although, for a long time, the developed countries kept on harping that the economies of the developing countries in Asia being parallel, there was no possibility of greater expansion of trade.

What we have been attempting under the Asian Council of Ministers is a much deeper economic cooperation between the Asian countries. I should like to say that the efforts that were made about a year ago to forge closer economic cooperation between the Asian countries are beginning to bear fruit. The tasks that were assigned by the Asian Council of Ministers to the Working Group that had been set up are nearing completion, I think, by the end of summer or early autumn, and then we shall have an opportunity to meet in the Asian

Council of Ministers towards the end of the year to take stock of the various studies that have been going on and how we can ourselves establish closer bonds between the countries of Asia.

In trying to establish closer multi-lateral collaboration between the Asian countries, we have not neglected our bi-lateral contacts. The economic cooperation that we have established with Ceylon and with Iran are examples of close bilateral collaborations which are not only for the promotion of trade but also for encouraging economic activity in the two countries and other prospects of multi-lateralism. My Honourable friend, S. K. Tapuriah, finds it a little difficult to understand because it does not give money quickly but very soon he will appreciate.

S. K. Tapuriah (Pali): He is no longer the Commerce Minister; he is speaking only about economics and all that. If he wants to go, that is a different thing.

Dinesh Singh: The difficulty is that such economics takes away the attempted monopoly that he makes and therefore, he fears that even if I am not the Commerce Minister I continue to trouble him. I can assure him that it is not my intention. It is my intention to forge closer economic cooperation in Asia.

Manubhai Patel (Dabhoi): Are you reading his thoughts? Is there mental telepathy going on?

Dinesh Singh: Although he sits close to you... (interruption). I am putting forward the economic aspects. We have not neglected the political aspects. I was trying to say that in Asia it is necessary to reforge the links that were snapped away and the economic links are of vital interest to all countries in Asia because the problems of Asia are the problems of development and unless we can find quick answers to give to the people in all countries of Asia a better life. and unless we can give them the prospect of close identity

for development in their own countries and in Asia as a whole, the position of instability will continue. There will always be risks of domination. Whether it comes in terms of foreign aid or whether it comes in some other forms of military pacts or other system, it is domination because the Asian countries have not been enabled to stand on their own feet. That is why one hears of all kinds of pacts, influences, and unless we go to the root of it, it is difficult to find an answer. As mentioned, it has not been limited to the efforts that we have made in the economic field.

The Prime Minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi, put forward a positive proposal in 1967 to forge close Asian identity. The Prime Minister suggested the idea of having a convention among the nations of Asia ensuring respect for independence and sovereignty and territorial integrity of the countries of the region and neutrality of all countries which wish to remain neutral. Such a convention should be signed not only by all countries of the region but also by the great powers. It should incorporate the five principles of peaceful coexistence and the concept of economic, cultural, scientific and technical cooperation. I hope the concerned countries will give consideration to this suggestion made three years ago and that it will form the basis of promoting peace, security, stability and progress in Asia.

The Honourable Member had said that we had talked of the European security system, and that we have welcomed what they are doing in Europe. I am now trying to give them an idea of what we are doing in Asia and perhaps it hurts them because they know that we are making a positive contribution to forging closer Asian cooperation and are only trying to build up an image of our not having been able to do so. So, I can understand the small irritations but the facts cannot be rubbed out by small jibes here and

there.

When I talk of the Asian cooperation, there has been a certain measure of, if I may say so, a deliberate attempt to confuse what is called the Brezhnev proposal with Asian cooperation. I read out the proposal that the Prime Minister of India had made in March 1967. It was three years ago. The proposal that has been put forward by Mr. Brezhnev is very much more recent. Yet, there is an attempt to try to say that whatever comes from Moscow, we attach more importance to it. This is born out of an inferiority complex on the part of some of our friends on that side who always look to Washington, London and other places. So it is absolutely necessary for us to look to what is happening in New Delhi, not to Washington or Moscow or London. (Interruptions). If they do so, they will find for themselves a place of dignity and honour.

S. K. Tapuriah: This is the first policy pronouncement in his speech. He says, look at New Delhi and not towards Moscow. I am really happy today at this change. I hope he keeps looking towards Delhi.

Dinesh Singh: If the Honourable Member likes to go to Washington he can go there now.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I should like to say that the ideas put forward as the Brezhnev proposal are in many ways what the Prime Minister has said three years ago; we cannot condemn them because they have come from Moscow. If they coincide with our ideas we must welcome them.

M.L. Sondhi: How is Mr Brezhnev's health today?

Dinesh Singh: I have no doubt that if the proceedings of the House are known outside, Mr Brezhnev will be deeply touched by the concern the Honourable Member has expressed.

Now some Members made an insinuation that we were

recognizing the Soviet Union as an Asian power only to enable the Soviet Union to bring its navy to the Indian Ocean as if we could keep out navies of other countries, as if the American navy is not present, as if the British navy is not here even when they are not Asian powers in any way. But that does not hold good. I am amazed that they felt it was a sort of security and the going away of the British navy has now created a vacuum. And I have said in this House repeatedly that we welcome the withdrawal of the British navy. It was a symbol of domination in Asia and never a symbol of progress in Asia, and I am surprised and in many ways humiliated when my countrymen say, 'What will happen if the British go away'. Asians will have to fight for their independence, not the British. And, it is time that we realized that we are not going to depend on others either for our defence or for our progress or for development, that we have the resources here, we have the technical know-how and we have got to prepare ourselves to meet the challenges that come and it can be done only with a measure of self-respect, dignity and self-reliance and not looking to Washington or Moscow.

(*Lok Sabha Debates*, 4th Series, V. 39, 8 April 1970, cols. 241-245).

APPENDIX II

CEYLON'S MEMORANDUM OF INDIAN OCEAN SECURITY

Recent Developments

Recent reports point to an increasing naval presence of the Soviet and U.S. fleets in the Indian Ocean. It would also appear that these fleets, carrying nuclear capability, are becoming part of the strategic defence system of the World powers. Another disturbing development is the militarization of the Indian Ocean. The same reports indicate that various island and land-based facilities are being utilized to facilitate the operation of these fleets. The most recent report gave official confirmation that an island in the Indian Ocean, Diego Garcia, is being converted into a communications centre, very likely for the guidance of U.S. nuclear systems.

One of the immediate dangers of this apparent trend is that the Indian Ocean area, which has been relatively free in this respect, is in danger of becoming a satellite of the security system of the major powers—both as a launching area as well as a target area for nuclear systems. Another likely result of this development is that there will be an intensification of "cold war" politics which will in itself lead to a number of consequences.

The following could be some of the more important consequences of this likely intensification of cold war poli-

tics in the Indian Ocean:

(i) In an area where colonial and racial issues are pressing, the impact of "cold war" attitudes is likely to result in a blurring of distinctions between colonial and "cold war" issues. For instance, apartheid in South Africa will tend to look more benign, seen from the viewpoint of an anti-communist approach. On the other hand, the freedom movements of African peoples will be regarded as subversive.

(ii) British sales of arms to South Africa is indicative of the attitudes that might be set in motion by the intrusion of "cold war" politics into the region.

(iii) Contradictions and conflicts in the Indian Ocean area will tend to polarise.

(iv) It would not be possible to rule out the likelihood of the direct or indirect intervention by the super powers in the internal affair of States.

Insecurity in the Indian Ocean

The Indian Ocean area is already subject to tensions within its own boundaries. A major cause of insecurity stems from the colonial and racial problems of Southern Africa. Another major factor arises from the emergence of China as a major power. Insecurity also arises from the general conditions of economic under-development characterizing the area and from the pressures for change among peoples of the region. These conditions of basic insecurity which have deep-rooted historical and structural causes, make it essential that the problems of the region should be resolved without further exacerbation by the politics of the "cold war".

The Peace Zone Concept

There appears to be some concern about the power vacuum in the Indian Ocean arising from the change in Britain's traditional role of holding monopolistic naval power in the area. The anxiety in this respect is also that the vacuum is being filled by a major power which adds to the sense of insecurity of countries which have apprehensions about a power vacuum.

The alternative to a power vacuum in the Indian Ocean, however, is a "balance of power" system. The development of Soviet naval power and their ability to operate naval fleets in the Indian Ocean, make it clear that the monopoly of naval power wielded by Britain cannot be replaced by a monopoly of naval power by the United States.

The idea of a Peace Zone, including a nuclear-free zone, has been advanced by some countries including Ceylon. The objective of such a Peace Zone would be to ensure that the major powers, by tacit or explicit action, by mutual agreement or unilaterally, will agree to respect the region as a zone where they will refrain from any action injurious to the cause of peace. This means, among other things, that the freedom of the high seas will be subject to important voluntary limitations. It also means that the great powers will likewise voluntarily limit their involvement in collective security arrangements and will not seek or use any facilities for militarising the Indian Ocean. A parallel corollary of a Peace Zone is that regional States bordering the Indian Ocean will themselves refrain from action prejudicial to the concept of a Peace Zone. Their defence requirements therefore would have to be measured against their obligations not to compromise the concept of a Peace Zone.

The ultimate object of the Peace Zone would be to stabilize the Indian Ocean as a power vacuum so that the abrasive conflicts of the "cold war" do not enter it and the region could concentrate on the solution of its major problems of security, under-development, etc.

The Indian Ocean area is a region of low solidarities or community of interests. Although it forms a geographical and historical entity, there are few cooperative links between countries in the region and these are either bilateral or sub-regional. A Peace Zone in the Indian Ocean will provide countries of this region with time to develop trends towards integration and cooperation so that in course of time the Indian Ocean region could move from an area of low solidarity to an area of high solidarity. In effect a Peace Zone will provide the transitional minimum conditions for the development of an "Indian Ocean Community" in which problems of security will be dealt with by orderly and institutional means for promoting peaceful change.

Scope for Commonwealth of Nations

There are nearly 15 members of the Commonwealth which are either States bordering the Indian Ocean or are located in the hinterland region in proximity to it. Britain has traditionally wielded power in the area and continues to exercise considerable influence. The Commonwealth excludes super powers but includes a great diversity of countries and viewpoints. In the circumstances, the framework of the Commonwealth provides a natural and useful forum for action with regard to peace, security and development.

The Commonwealth programme for action which will stimulate peaceful change, enhance security and stability, promote intra-regional integration, and foster the development

of an "Indian Ocean Community" could be based on the following lines:

(*i*) The trend towards militarization of the Indian Ocean to be terminated, and the negative concept of a power vacuum to be converted to a positive idea of a Peace Zone.

(*ii*) A special Commonwealth responsibility exists in Southern Africa, because events there run counter to developments in other parts of the former British Empire. The need is to bring about political evolutions which will preclude the possibility of a violent solution.

(*iii*) The question of "cold war", colonialism and race relations should be kept apart because their association inflames issues and reduces the chance of peaceful solutions. The sale of arms to South Africa in this respect will be a retrograde step.

(*iv*) China's admission to the UN would be a major contribution to the stability of the area. The Commonwealth could have a part in this development.

(*v*) Finally, a Commonwealth programme for promoting economic, technical and social cooperation between those Indian Ocean States which are members of the Commonwealth, thus assisting further in the progress toward an "Indian Ocean Community".

(Presented at the Singapore Conference of Commonwealth Heads of States, January 1971, by the Ceylonese Prime Minister, Mrs Bandarnaike).

APPENDIX III

(TEXT OF SPEECH MADE BY MRS. SIRIMAVO BHANDARNAIKE PRIME MINISTER OF CEYLON, AT THE MEETING OF COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT IN SINGAPORE ON 21 JANUARY 1971, LAUNCHING A DISCUSSION ON SECURITY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN)

As you are all aware, I have tabled a paper on the security of the Indian Ocean which I know has already been circulated to all Member Governments of the Commonwealth. We are a small country with a history and civilization of over 2,500 years. Since the 16th century we have been invaded, occupied, and colonized, first by Portugal, then by Holland and lastly by Britain, and we know that the principal reason for the colonization of Ceylon was its geographically strategic situation. During the Second World War, Ceylon became the South East Asian Headquarters for the allied forces, and, though not actually a theatre of war, we had to suffer two air raids by Japanese bombers in Colombo and Trincomalee in consequence, and our people were put to considerable hardship in economic terms and in many other ways. At that time, Colombo, Katunayake and Trincomalee were important wartime installations, and it was only after 1956 that my late husband was able, by negotiation, to dismantle the bases. Even after Independence our present economic situation is attributable to the aftermath of these wars.

At the outset, I wish to make it clear that the question I am raising in relation to Indian Ocean security is not in any way the same as what we have been discussing for the last two days. I understand that Mr Heath in his remarks last night thought that I was questioning the freedom of the

seas, the rights of nations to protect their sea routes, or indeed, to have a naval presence in the Indian Ocean. I would like to assure him and other Commonwealth leaders that this is not my intention. Many of our countries in the Indian Ocean have little navies of our own. Some of us, like Singapore for instance, have our own bases and installations. Some have alliances for mutual defence with other countries in case the need arises. I do not question any of this. I quite agree that if Britain wishes to have a limited naval presence to patrol her trade routes as an act of vigilance, she has as much right as any other country to do so.

The problem is not solely a question of keeping the cold war out of the Indian Ocean. We are all aware that there is an American as well as a Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean. Many of these vessels presumably do not call at ports, and some of them, we understand, are capable of remaining at sea for prolonged periods without returning to base. The weapons that such vessels could carry include nuclear warheads capable of immense destruction. Until now however, neither the USA nor the Soviet Union have had any bases on territories under their control in the Indian Ocean, for stockpiling of weapons or the conduct of dangerous operations in a moment of crisis. The substance of our position is that weapons attract weapons, and bases, whatever they may be called, will attract bases from the opposing parties. If either of the super powers established a naval base in the Indian Ocean, it will only be a matter of time before the other follows suit. In this context, we feel that there is a world of difference between, for example, the British air base at Gan airfield in the Maldives, or the Indian or Pakistani military installations in their respective territories, and the base that Britain has recently agreed to place in Diego Garcia under the control of the United States of America.

The difference lies in this. Diego Garcia will be a territory under the control of one of the super powers, namely the United States of America. I am aware that Diego Garcia has been referred to as a communications centre. But what guarantee, I ask, is there that such a communications centre will not be put to other purposes at a moment of crisis, by the country in control of it? Furthermore, I have taken note of Mr Heath's assurances last night that he had obtained assurances from the Government of South Africa, after prolonged consultations, with regard to the manner in which the sale of arms under the Simonstown agreement was to be utilized. In the case of Diego Garcia, however, I regret to observe that no such consultations, so far as I know, have been held with any of the countries of the Commonwealth bordering the Indian Ocean. While I appreciate that feelings on this question may not be quite as sharp or emotionally involved as in regard to apartheid and the question of arms sales to South Africa, it does seem to me that the question of consultation and guarantees is just as important.

I do not know whether anything can be done about Diego Garcia now. I hope it will be possible to obtain some guarantees even at this late stage and to ensure that no further bases are established for either of the super powers on Commonwealth territories without such consultations and guarantees.

Some of our countries have adopted non-alignment as the first line of defence. It is our firm belief, based on experience, that if we are to build our own economy to give our people a better way of life, we must have an atmosphere of peace around us. We do not want to live in fear. Nor do we wish to impose our ideas on the ideology of others. Nor do we have expansionist tendencies. But when there are rumblings of war in any part of South East Asia, the Middle

East or the potential dangers of conflict in Southern Africa, you will understand that we become most concerned about great powers wanting to establish bases under their control in the ocean around us.

While vessels including warships, of different nationalities are permitted the use of our port facilities, the ports themselves are under our control and our control only. Basically this situation is no different in Singapore. I, therefore, would request the Conference to give serious consideration to accepting, in principle, a formulation acceptable to everybody on the maintenance of the Indian Ocean as a peace zone and a nuclear-free zone. I personally think that the Lusaka formulation should be acceptable and I commend it to this Conference.

Lest there should be any misunderstanding, I would like to reiterate that we do not see any solution to this problem by adjustments in the balance of power. Our concept of a peace zone totally excludes the intrusion of great power conflicts into the region, with their attendant defence systems. The extension of such defence systems to any part of the Indian Ocean, and in any form or circumstances, and by any country, will cut at the roots of the whole purpose of our recommendation.

APPENDIX IV

PEACE ZONE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

"Mr President, the main purpose of my address today is to place before this Assembly a proposal which, if accepted, could make a positive and far reaching contribution to the cause of peace. I propose that the Indian Ocean be declared a Zone of Peace. The item has been inscribed on the Agenda of this Session as an important and urgent one. The proposal is not a completely new one. The concept of a Zone of Peace is inherent in the concept of nonalignment which requires that the land territories, air space and territorial waters of non-aligned States must be closed to great power conflicts and rivalries. All areas under the jurisdiction of non-aligned States should, therefore, by definition be Zones of Peace. The Peace Zone concept as applied to ocean areas, however, goes back to the Cairo meeting of non-aligned States in 1964. We were concerned then with one aspect of the question—the establishment of atom free zones in various parts of the world, including Asia. In September 1970, at the Lusaka Conference of non-aligned States, we went a stage further and called for a Peace Zone in the Indian Ocean, which would be not only free of nuclear weapons but also one from which great power rivalries and competition would be excluded. It was the intrusion of these power rivalries into the Indian Ocean that resulted in the loss of political freedom in Asia in the eighteenth century. We certainly do not wish to see a recurrence of that situation. Our object is to contain the activities of foreign powers and ensure that they do not

make our part of the world a battleground for their rivalries.

The global implications of the proposal require that it should receive universal acceptance and be fitted into the larger design of world peace and security and of general and complete disarmament. These were among the considerations that led me to present the proposal to the meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers in Singapore at the beginning of this year. I now commend it to the General Assembly of the United Nations. The proposal should not be regarded merely as part of a scheme of collective security confined to the Indian Ocean. On the contrary it is intended as a direct and tangible contribution to the disarmament decade and to the strengthening of conditions for world peace.

Mr President, in recent years there has been a trend in the development of international law and practice towards the principle that areas not assimilated to national jurisdiction shall constitute an international domain that should be subject to international regulation and international responsibility. Existing circumstances in the Indian Ocean as distinct from other oceans of the world, are especially conducive to the application of this policy to the area. There are no nuclear powers nor any major nations among the littoral states of the Indian Ocean. They are in fact geographically remote from the area and have no reason to consider the Indian Ocean as critical or vital to their security and strategic interests. The military and naval forces of the great powers in the Indian Ocean have not yet assumed significant proportions and the adoption of the Indian Ocean Peace Zone proposal would not involve us in the necessity of making elaborate provision for the dismantling of existing military bases and installations as would be the case in other areas.

Sea Lanes

We recognize the fact that important commercial sea lanes lie across the Indian Ocean. The use of these sea lanes is crucial to the interests of the Great Powers and other non-littoral States. Any arrangements to give effects to our proposal should accordingly take due account of these interests. The littoral States, however, have a paramount interest in the defence and security of these lines of communication. At their level of development they need conditions of peace and tranquillity to transform and modernize their economies. Their energies and resources must be preserved intact and employed exclusively for the advancement of the social and economic well-being of their peoples. They could be freed from all liability for the defence and security of the area if all other nations would refrain from any military intrusion into the area.

Mr President, several questions will be raised in regard to the proposal: What geographical limits are contemplated for the zone of peace? What are the implications of the proposal for the principle of freedom of the seas? What is the regulatory system envisaged? What is to be the future of already existing bases falling within the prescribed zone? Will present treaty commitments be affected? What type of international instrument would be needed to establish such a regime? We have given some thought to these matters and have some general ideas as to the answers. We hope that countries interested in the proposal will join us in resolving these issues.

The essence of our proposal is that in the Indian Ocean a defined area shall be declared to be a Zone of Peace and reserved exclusively for peaceful purposes under an appropriate regulatory system. Within the zone no armaments of

any kind, defensive or offensive, may be installed on or in the sea, on the subjacent sea bed or on land areas. Ships of all nations may exercise the right of transit but warships and ships carrying warlike equipment including submarines, may not stop for other than emergency reasons of a technical, mechanical, or humanitarian nature. No manoeuvres by warships of any State shall be permitted. Naval intelligence operations shall be forbidden. No weapon tests of any kind may be conducted, the regulatory system to be established will be under effective international control.

It may be argued that a zone of peace in an ocean area would be incompatible with a body of customary and conventional international law which seeks to preserve the seas beyond territorial waters as open to all nations. There is no reason why this concept should not be modified to accommodate the needs and realities of the world of today. One may go so far as to say that the principle of the freedom of the high seas does not adequately serve the fundamental interests of all nations alike, but is clearly weighted in favour of the interests of the dominant user nations. This inequality must be redressed.

(From Mrs. Bandaranaike's address to the U.N. General Assembly on 12 October 1971).

APPENDIX V

SECOND CONFERENCE OF NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES, CAIRO, 5-10 OCTOBER 1964

The Conference considers that the declaration by African States regarding the de-nuclearization of Africa, the aspirations of the Latin American countries to de-nuclearize their continent and the various proposals pertaining to the denuclearization of areas in Europe and Asia are steps in the right direction because they assist in consolidating international peace and security and lessening international tensions.

The Conference recommends the establishment of denuclearized zones covering these and other areas and the oceans of the world, particularly those which have been hitherto free from nuclear weapons, in accordance with the desires expressed by the states and peoples concerned.

The Conference also requests the nuclear powers to respect these de-nuclearized zones...

VII *Military Pacts, Foreign Troops and Bases*

The Conference reiterates its conviction that the existence of military blocs, Great Power alliances and pacts arising therefrom has accentuated the cold war and heightened international tensions. The Non-Aligned Countries are, therefore, opposed to taking part in such pacts and alliances.

The Conference considers the maintenance or future establishment of foreign military bases and the stationing of

foreign troops on the territories of other countries, against expressed will of those countries, as a gross violation of the sovereignty of states, and as a threat to freedom and international peace. It furthermore considers as particularly indefensible the existence of future establishment of bases in dependent territories which could be used for the maintenance of colonialism or for other purposes.

Noting with concern that foreign military bases are in practice a means of bringing pressure on nations and retarding their emancipation and development, based on their own ideological, political, economic and cultural ideas, the Conference declares its full support to the countries which are seeking to secure the evacuation of foreign bases on their territory and calls upon all states maintaining troops and bases in other countries to remove them forthwith...

The Conference condemns the expressed intention of imperialist powers to establish bases in the Indian Ocean as a calculated attempt to intimidate the emerging countries of Africa and Asia and an unwarranted extension of the policy of neo-colonialism and imperialism...

(Conference of Heads of State and Governments of Non-Aligned Countries, Cairo, 5-10 October 1964, Cairo, A Ministry of National Guidance publication, pp. 350-52)

APPENDIX VI

THIRD CONFERENCE OF NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES, LUSAKA, 8-10 SEPTEMBER 1970

Excerpt from Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's Speech

We have been deeply disturbed by the reported intention of the United Kingdom and other Governments to supply arms to the Government of South Africa. This dangerous and retrograde step will threaten the neighbours of South Africa and also the Indian Ocean area. Any accretion to South Africa's military capability will abet its policy of apartheid and racial discrimination, and may encourage it to annex other territories. The argument that this is being done to protect the so-called security of sea routes is untenable. We would like the Indian Ocean to be an area of peace and cooperation. Military bases of outside powers will create tension and great power rivalry. (*Review of International Affairs*, Vol. XXI, No. 491, 20 September 1970, Belgrade, p. 22).

Excerpt from the Resolution on the United Nations

On the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the United Nations, the non-aligned countries participating in the Conference are determined to cooperate among themselves, and with other countries, to strengthen the functions of the United Nations for the purpose of strengthening peace, consolidating independence, promoting development and

bringing about greater cooperation on the basis of equality of all states. With this end in view, the participating countries agree to specifically exert efforts on the following issues during the current session...

(6) The Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace—Adoption of a Declaration calling upon all States to consider and respect the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace from which great power rivalries and competition as well as bases conceived in the context of such rivalries and competition, either army, navy or air force bases, are excluded. The area should also be free of nuclear weapons.

(*Review of International Affairs*, Vol. XXI, No. 491, September 1970, p. 33).

APPENDIX VII

NAVAL STRENGTH OF INDIAN OCEAN

India

1 16,000-ton aircraft carrier
4 submarines (ex-Soviet F-class)
2 cruisers
3 destroyers
9 destroyer escorts (including 5 ex-Soviet Petya class)
1 general purpose frigate
5 anti-sub frigate
3 anti-aircraft frigate
10 patrol boats
4 coastal minesweepers
4 inshore minesweepers
1 landing ship
2 landing craft
9 seaward defence boats

Pakistan

4 submarines
1 light cruiser/trg. ship
2 destroyers
3 destroyer escorts
2 fast frigates
4 patrol boats
8 coastal minesweeper
2 small patrol boats

Indonesia

12 submarines (ex-Soviet W class)
1 cruiser (ex-Soviet *Sverdlov* class)
4 destroyers (ex-Soviet *Skory* class)
11 frigates (including 7 ex-Soviet *Riga* class)
18 coastal escorts (14 ex-Soviet 4 ex-U.S.A.)
12 *Komar* class patrol boats
8 patrol boats
30 motor torpedo boats
6 fleet minesweepers
15 coastal minesweepers
18 motor gunboats
25 seaward defence boats
6 landing ships
7 landing craft

Iran

1 destroyer
1 frigate (4 with *seacat* SAM are being delivered)
4 corvettes
4 patrol boats
4 coastal minesweepers
2 inshore minesweepers
8 SRN-6 and 2 *Wellington hovercraft* (less than 100 tons)
4 landing craft

South Africa

1 submarine (2 more due for delivery by mid-1972)
2 destroyers with *Wasp* ASW Helicopters
6 ASW frigates
1 escort minesweeper
10 coastal minesweepers
5 seaward defence boats
1 fleet replenishment tanker

Australia

4 submarines
1 aircraft carriers (ASW)
3 GM destroyers with *Tartar* SAM
5 destroyers
6 destroyer escorts
2 minehunters
4 coastal minesweepers
20 patrol boats
1 fast troop transport
1 destroyer tender

Malaysia

2 ASW frigates (1 with seacat SAM).
4 fast patrol boats
24 other patrol boats
6 coastal minesweepers

(SOURCES: *The Military Balance 1971-72*, I.I.S.S., London, 1971)

APPENDIX VIII

DECLARATION OF THE INDIAN OCEAN AS A ZONE OF PEACE

U.N. GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 2832, XXVI, 16 DECEMBER 1971, 2022nd PLENARY MEETING

The General Assembly,

Conscious of the determination of the peoples of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean to preserve their independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to resolve their political, economic and social problems under conditions of peace and tranquillity,

Recalling the Declaration of the Third Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Lusaka in September 1970, calling upon all States to consider and respect the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace from which great power rivalries and competition as well as bases conceived in the context of such rivalries and competition should be excluded, and declaring that the area should also be free of nuclear weapons,

Convinced of the desirability of ensuring the maintenance of such conditions in the area by means other than military alliances, as such alliances entail financial and other obligations that call for the diversion of limited resources of these states from the more compelling and productive task of economic and social reconstruction and could further involve them in the rivalries of power blocs in a manner

prejudicial to their independence and freedom of action, thereby increasing international tensions,

Concerned at recent developments that portend the extension of the arms races into the Indian Ocean area, thereby posing a serious threat to the maintenance of such conditions in the area,

Convinced that the establishment of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean would contribute towards arresting such developments, relaxing international tensions and strengthening international peace and security,

Convinced further that the establishment of a zone of peace in an extensive geographical area in one region could have a beneficial influence on the establishment of permanent universal peace based on equal rights and justice for all, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

I. *Solemnly declares* that the Indian Ocean, within limits to be determined, together with the air space above and the Ocean floor subjacent thereto, is hereby designated for all time as a zone of peace;

II. *Calls upon* the great powers, in conformity with this Declaration, to enter into immediate consultations with the littoral states of the Indian Ocean with a view to:

(a) Halting the further escalation and expansion of their military presence in the Indian Ocean;

(b) Eliminating from the Indian Ocean all bases, military installations, logistical supply facilities, the disposition of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction and any manifestation of Great Power military presence in the Indian Ocean conceived in the context of Great Power rivalry;

III. *Calls upon* the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean, the Permanent members of the Security

Council and other major maritime users of the Indian Ocean, in pursuit of the objective of establishing a system of universal collective security without military alliances and strengthening international security through regional and other cooperation, to enter into consultations with a view to the implementation of this Declaration and such action as may be necessary to ensure that:

(*a*) Warships and military aircraft may not use the Indian Ocean for any threat or use of forces against the sovereignty, territorial integrity or independence of any littoral or hinterland state of the Indian Ocean in contravention of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations;

(*b*) Subject to the foregoing and the norms and principles of international law, the right to free and unimpeded use of the zone by the vessels of all nations is unaffected;

(*c*) Appropriate arrangements are made to give effect to any international agreement that may ultimately be reached for the maintenance of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace;

IV. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its twenty-seventh session on the progress that has been made with regard to the implementation of this Declaration;

V. *Decides* to include the item entitled "Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace" in the provisional agenda of its twenty-seventh session.

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